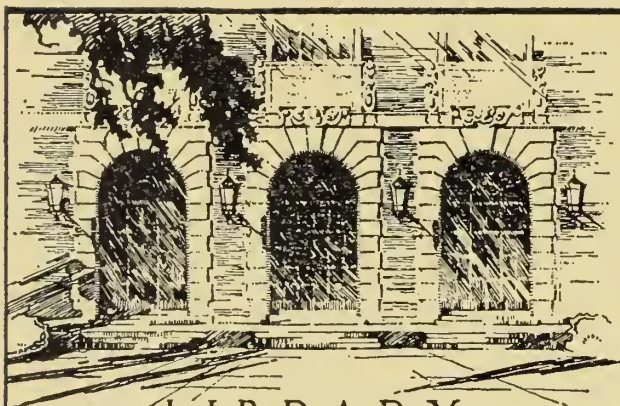




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THE BUFFALO TRACE



R. NEWCOMB
605 Nevada St.
URBANA, ILL.

By

George R. Wilson and Gayle Thornbrough

INDIANAPOLIS
INDIANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

1946

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FOREWORD

The 1935 session of the General Assembly provided by Act for a commission "to ascertain, determine and fix the route of the historical Buffalo trace across southern Indiana and to provide for the incorporation of the route so determined and fixed in the state highway system."

The members of the commission, the late George R. Wilson, chairman, John K. Chappell, secretary, and the late Lew M. O'Bannon, submitted their report, prepared by Mr. Wilson, to Governor Paul V. McNutt on October 1, 1936. By searching the field notes of the men who made the rectangular surveys of Floyd, Harrison, Crawford, Orange, Dubois, and Pike counties, Mr. Wilson was able to chart the course of the trace almost continuously from Floyd County to the point where it enters the private land claims in Pike and Knox counties.

This report was made the basis for the following article on the trace. The record of the course of the trace which Mr. Wilson compiled from the field notes is given in the Appendix.

July, 1946

GAYLE THORNBROUGH

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THE BUFFALO TRACE

A PROSPECTIVE traveler to the western country in 1818 might have consulted William Darby's *Emigrant's Guide to the Western and Southwestern States and Territories*. Here he would have found outlined an overland route from Pittsburgh to Lexington, Kentucky. From thence, if he wished to go into Indiana, Illinois, and the Missouri country, he could follow the route designated as No. 54 in the *Guide*, which was as follows:¹

From Pittsburg to Vincennes

To Lexington [Ky.] (See No. 25 [49]) . .	332	332
Frankfort	22	354
Shelbyville	22	376
Middletown	20	396
Louisville	12	408
Clarksville	3	411
The Knobs	5	416
Beech [Buck?] Creek	7	423
Indian Creek	6	429
Blue River	12	441
Sullivan's Spring ²	17	458
Little Blue River	3	461
Big Lick	8	469
Patoka Creek	9	478
Mud Holes	9	487
Muddy Creek	10	497
White Oak Spring	8	505
White River	5	510
Vincennes	15	525

On this route the traveler would cross the Ohio at the Falls and journey across southern Indiana from Clarksville to the

¹ Darby, William, *The Emigrant's Guide to the Western and Southwestern States and Territories* . . . (New York, Kirk & Mercein, 1818), p. 275. The frontispiece map shows two roads across southern Indiana, one from Louisville and one from Cincinnati, converging a little over half way across the state into one road leading to Vincennes.

² See *post* p. 225n.

Wabash, a distance, according to the above figures, of 114 miles. Accounts left by travelers show that this journey required about three days on horseback. Nights might be spent at taverns, so-called, which offered varying degrees of discomfort, or at the house of an obliging farmer. Ferries were available only on the big rivers; most of the streams had to be forded.

Primitive and disagreeable as this might have seemed to some visitors, southern Indiana in 1817 was rapidly moving beyond a "frontier" status. Her population was mounting; towns were springing up; internal improvements were under way. In 1818 Indiana was enjoying her second year as a full-fledged member of the Union, and in his comments on her prospects, Mr. Darby was most enthusiastic. "It may be doubted," he wrote, "whether any state of the United States, all things duly considered, can present more advantages than Indiana."³

The story of Indiana's emergence from the days of Indian occupation, French and British exploration and intrigue, and frontier Indian wars into statehood might well have aroused the interest of the traveler of 1818 who made his way slowly westward across the state; and the narrow trail which he followed, had he realized it, had been one of the most important adjuncts of that story of growth and unification. What white man first passed that way is not known—probably a French *coureur de bois* or missionary. Its outlines are believed to have been cut through the forests by herds of buffalo, or, more properly, American bison, passing from the Falls to the Wabash.

Three routes of travel besides waterways were offered the white men who explored the western country—Indian trails, buffalo roads, and the dry beds of streams. Often the Indian and the buffalo availed themselves of each others paths and their routes became the same. Herds of buffalo roamed over the area of the central states from the Great Lakes south to Tennessee. M. de Vaudreuil, governor of Canada, commenting in 1718 on the great number of buffalo en-

³ Darby, *Emigrant's Guide*, p. 215.

countered in the woods along the "Beautiful river," the Ohio, said that travelers often found it necessary "to discharge their guns to clear a passage for themselves."⁴ Buffalo roads or "streets," as they were called by the early hunters, marked the woods and meadows. Probably the most famous were in Kentucky, where the herds, seeking salt, moved from one salt lick or spring to another, and made passages through cane brakes almost impenetrable to man "as trodden and wide, as in the neighborhood of a populous city."⁵

In 1765 George Croghan, visiting the Big Bone Lick in Boone County, Kentucky, made a memorandum in his journal of the "large road which the Buffaloes have beaten, spacious enough for two waggons to go abreast, and leading straight into the Lick."⁶ A few years later (1773), a surveyor, James Douglass, marveled at the same spectacle. The lick as he described it comprised "about ten acres of land bare of timber, and of grass or herbage; much trodden, beaten and depressed below the original surface; with here and there a knob remaining to shew its former elevation. . . . To this lick, from all parts of the neighbouring country, were converging roads, made by the wild animals that resorted to the place for salt, which both the earth and water contained."⁷

Salt licks in southern Indiana attracted the buffalo herds, too. The Moravian missionary, John Heckewelder, returning from Post Vincennes to the Falls of the Ohio in 1792, passed "Buffalo Salt Lick," probably French Lick, which he described

⁴ O'Callaghan, Edmund B. (ed.), *Documents Relating to the Colonial History of the State of New York* . . . (11 volumes. 1856-87), IX, 886.

⁵ Butler, Mann, *A History of the Commonwealth of Kentucky from Its Exploration and Settlement by the Whites to . . . 1813* (Louisville, 1834), pp. 24-25. See also Jillson, Willard Rouse, *Pioneer Kentucky* . . . (Frankfort, 1934), Chapter III, "First Routes, Trails, and Traces"; Hulbert, Archer B., *Paths of the Mound-Building Indians and Great Game Animals*, and *Indian Thorougfhfares (Historic Highways of America)*, Volumes I and II, Cleveland, 1902).

⁶ Croghan, George, "A Selection of George Croghan's Letters and Journals Relating to Tours into the Western Country—November 16, 1750-November, 1765," in Thwaites, Reuben Gold (ed.), *Early Western Travels* . . . (32 volumes. Cleveland, 1904-7), I, 135.

⁷ Quoted in Butler, *History of Kentucky*, p. 22.

as a "salt spot, several acres in size," "so much trodden down and grubbed up," he wrote, "that not a blade of grass can grow and the entire woods are for miles around quite bare. Many heads and skeletons of these animals are to be found which were either shot from time to time, or had died there. From here a great many buffalo trails lead out. . . ."⁸

In their long migrations north and south in the spring and fall, and in their shorter passages between salt licks and springs and grassy meadows of one area, the buffalo seemed to have had an instinct for choosing the easiest grades and most direct courses, and the passing and repassing of these tremendous herds made the beds of their roads as hard as modern ones. Daniel Boone, in opening his famous Wilderness Road, availed himself of both the Indian "Warrior Path" and a buffalo road. Years after these animals had departed from this area, the incoming settlers found their roads, though clogged and covered with brush and fallen trees, so direct and convenient and so hard of surface that they cleared and opened them for their own use.

The trace from the Falls of the Ohio to Vincennes, or parts of it, may have been made by the buffalo. That it followed a direct and convenient route is evidenced by the fact that Indians and then white men used it for many years. One early traveler thus described the country through which it passed:⁹ "In going from the Ohio to the Wabash, say from Clarksville . . . to Vincennes, you ascend from two to three hundred feet before you find yourself at the top of the last bank of the Ohio; you have then before you a strip of country, twenty miles wide, tolerably level, except where gullied by the action of streams. This brings you to the foot of the 'Knobs' which are at least 500 feet higher than the land in your rear; after which you pass no very tedious hills until you find yourself within three miles from Vincennes. In

⁸ "Narrative of John Heckewelder's Journey to the Wabash in 1792," in *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, XII (1888), 173-74.

⁹ Palmer, John, *Journal of Travels in the United States of North America, and in Lower Canada, Performed in the Year 1817* . . . (London, 1818), p. 391. Melish's map in the frontispiece shows a road across Indiana from Louisville, by Jeffersonville, to Vincennes.

travelling from this place to the Ohio, you are not sensible of ascending to the height at which you find yourself on the summit of the 'Knobs,' from which you have a boundless prospect to the east: you can distinctly trace with the eye, at the distance of twenty miles. . . ."

In early records and travelers' accounts this route was referred to as "Vincennes Trace," "Louisville Trace," "Old Indian Trail," "Old Indian Road," "Clarksville Trace," "Trace to the Falls," etc. There is no reference to it as the "Buffalo Trace," but Cauthorn in his *History of the City of Vincennes* stated that it was so called "by old residents who had travelled over it." According to Cauthorn, the buffalo in their spring and autumn migrations "crossed the Kentucky River . . . in Scott county [Kentucky], the Ohio River at the falls at Louisville, and the Wabash at the ford just below this place [Vincennes], and thence to the rich prairie lands of Illinois beyond."¹⁰

The exact route that the trail followed at the time of the earliest references to it cannot be determined. It is evident that its course varied from time to time or that there were alternate paths that might be taken along the way. If it was originally cut through the woods by the buffalo, there would probably have been several paths at certain points from which a traveler might choose, his choice depending on such things as the season, weather conditions, and the location of Indian camps and parties. By examining references to travel between the Falls and Vincennes, it has been possible to get some idea of its route at various periods.

¹⁰ Cauthorn, Henry S., *A History of the City of Vincennes, Indiana* (Terre Haute, Ind., 1902), p. 16.

CLARK'S AND FILSON'S ROUTES

TWO allusions to an overland route from the Falls to Vincennes are to be found in George Rogers Clark's "Memoir" of his campaign against the British at Kaskaskia and Vincennes. The first of these is in connection with the robbing and murdering of a party of traders by the Delaware.

Following Hamilton's surrender at Fort Sackville, Clark returned to Kaskaskia to make plans for a campaign against Detroit. In his "Memoir"¹ he says that in March, 1779, "part of the Delaware Nation had settled a Town at the forks of the White River and Hunted the Cuntries on the Ohio and Mississippi they had on our first arrival Hatched up a kind of peace with us but I always new they ware for open war but never before could get a proper excuse for extirmenating them . . . a few Days after this Captⁿ Helms² informed me by express that a party of Traders that was going by Land to the Fall was Kiled and plundered by the Delawares of White River that it appeared that their designs was altogether Hostile as they had received a belt from the great Counsell of their Nation."

Orders were sent to Vincennes to make war on the Delaware—"their camps ware attacted in every quarter whare they could be fund," wrote Clark, "many fell and others brought to st Vincents and put to death."³

Clark himself returned to Louisville by an overland route. For his projected Detroit campaign he had requested reinforcements from Kentucky and Virginia. Had he been able to carry out his plans in 1779, British and Indian depredations against the Americans would have been made far more difficult and much of the bloodshed of the next twenty-five years might have been avoided. But his hopes were dashed. Of

¹ James, James A. (ed.), *George Rogers Clark Papers 1771-1781* (Illinois Historical Collections, VIII, Springfield, 1912), p. 298.

² Captain Leonard Helm, commandant at Vincennes.

³ James (ed.), *George Rogers Clark Papers 1771-1781*, p. 298.

the reinforcements he had counted on only one hundred and fifty arrived from Virginia, about one-third of what he had expected, and but thirty from Kentucky. "Never was a person more mortified than I was at this time, to see so fair an opportunity to push a victory; Detroit lost for want of a few men," wrote Clark.⁴ "Arranging things to the best advantage was now my principal Study. The Troops was divided between the posts of St Vincents Kohokias and Kaskaskias part to the Falls of Ohio. . . . myself to take up my quarters at the Falls as the most convenient Spot to have an eye over the whole each person marching to his post in Augst I arrived by Land [MS. imperfect] as far as White [MS. imperfect] in a few Days." He then proceeded to the Falls and on to Louisville.⁵

Thus, by the time the Revolutionary War came to the West, an overland route between the Falls and the Wabash was being used by Americans. On their journey they passed through a wilderness of forests and thickets abounding in all sorts of game. Indians from their towns on the Wabash and White rivers hunted here, and Indian braves, armed and incited by the British, made journeys this way a dangerous passage for Americans. Border warfare, cruel and bloody, marked the years following Clark's campaigns in the Western country, and traders risked their lives in every excursion across southern Indiana.

Post Vincennes, the western terminus of the trail, suffered with the times. Founded by the French perhaps as early as 1731, it remained until Clark's coming an isolated community first under French and after 1763 under British rule. Its inhabitants, indolent and unambitious, had traded with the Indians, and lived in peace and friendship with them. Their

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. cix-cx. Perhaps some of the men that did go to Vincennes marched overland from the Falls. See letter from William Shannon of Jefferson County, Kentucky, August 3, 1792, in Alvord, Clarence W. (ed.), *Kaskaskia Records 1778-1790* (*Illinois Historical Collection*, V, Springfield, 1909), p. 130, which says: ". . . an expedition was then prepared against Detroit. Indeed part of the troops, with provisions and military stores were then actually on their march to St Vincens on the Wabash, where they were to meet those expected from Kentucky, and to wait until the ballance from the Illinois would come up. However the expedition fell through. . . ."

⁵ James (ed.), *George Rogers Clark Papers 1771-1781*, p. 301.

government was the arbitrary rule of a commandant, who, with the help of the Catholic father, preserved fair order.

Clark's victory brought no improvement as far as the Post government was concerned. He had made his campaign under the authority of the Commonwealth of Virginia which claimed the territory northwest of the Ohio, and out of his conquests Virginia in 1778 organized the County of Illinois under supervision of a county lieutenant. The French system of local control by commandants and magistrates' courts was continued, and Colonel J. M. P. Le Gras was appointed commandant of Vincennes. Virginia, debt ridden by the Revolution and far away, made no provision for the county after 1781, when she agreed to cede her western lands to the United States. The garrison was withdrawn and local officials carried on as best they could without the backing of any strong authority.

Other factors were disruptive to the peace of the village. Following Clark's campaign, Americans began to settle in the neighborhood, and by 1786 they numbered about seventy families. Relations between them and the French were not smooth. A worse feature was that the Americans persistently indulged in liquor trade with the Indians.

The old trace now became closely linked with the events leading toward the establishment of peace, law and order, and organized government in the Western country. In 1785 and 1786 an observant traveler and patriotic American, interested in the advancement of the West, made two water journeys from Louisville to Vincennes and upon both occasions returned overland to the Falls. This was John Filson, explorer, surveyor, and author of the first History of Kentucky.

Filson proceeded down the Ohio from Pittsburgh to Louisville, then resumed his voyage down the river. He computed the distance from the Falls to the mouth of the Wabash as 318 miles, and from there to Vincennes as 132 miles. The overland route he estimated as only one hundred miles. Seven days after leaving the Falls the boat reached the Wabash and not until eleven days later did it arrive at Vincennes. However, Filson remarked that the distance up

the Wabash was covered in half that time by the French who knew the channel.⁶

Shortly after his arrival at Vincennes Filson decided to go back to Kentucky and return on a "trading voyage." To get back to Louisville he chose the much faster overland route to the Falls. "To effect this tour through the woods," he wrote,⁷ "as we were entirely unacquainted, it was necessary to hire indian guides, which for a few bottles of Whisky was soon procured, the Vermillion Chief his adopted Son and a Delaware offered their Service, these with a french Gentⁿ. who understood their language were our Companions and perhaps the best in Such a Situation that the world could afford. I Cannot Say that I ever was suspicious or had the least reason to be so of any ill design by them, on the Contrary they manifested the greatest Care & friend^p hunted for us, Cooked our food, and watched our nocturnal hours to prevent surprise, the old Chief was pleased to Call me his son and gave me the name of Muchoowoch which in his language was a Wolf, this man was of a remarkable honest penetrating ingenuous, friendly disposition, as I experienced more afterward, many remarks of friendship induced me to regard him, numerous were the branches he broke off to prevent their Striking or tearing me as I rode after him, and frequently wishing he Could Converse with me, upon this I reflected that a good Disposition and repeated kindness are Great unducements to solid friendship abstracted from every other motive. Without regard to Colour or nation or language, We arrived at the falls of ohio in 9 Days the Country through which we passed have a diversity of Soil but in no part so fertile as Kentucke, nor so well watered as might be desired, as extensive tracts are dry brushy Pareries and Scarce of timber a river whose water is of a blueish appearance but from what Cause I know not runs through this Country into Ohio and another Called reviere la Blanch or White river runs into ouabach 12 leagues below the Post, the head branches of this

⁶ Bond, Beverley W., Jr., "Two Westward Journeys of John Filson, 1785," in *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, IX (1922), 324-25.

⁷ *Ibid.*, IX, 329-30.

river I am well told are but about 12 miles from Ohio above the rapids and by a Small portage may form a water passage across the Country into ouabache which no doubt will answer a more Valuable purpose for transporting property than a great road, the difference between a land & water Carriage I saw plainly exemplified in that Country, for from the rapids of Ohio to Danville in Kentucke is about 80 miles by land and from the rapids to Post st Vincent by water is above 450, Yet 12 Shillings pr hundred wt. is the freight of the latter, and 20 Shillings the Carriage of the former. . . .”

Filson has left another account of the journey in which he gives a more detailed description of the route he followed. From this, apparently, they did not follow a clearly defined path all the way; at times they seem to have made their way in the general direction of their destination as best they could by beds of streams and through uncut woods.⁸ “Departed from Post St Vincent the 6th day of aug^t 1785 at 9 O’Clock A. M. on a Journey to the falls of Ohio, Capt Pierrault, Captⁿ Buckley & myself in Company with three indians (Madmoiselle, his adopted son, & a Delaware, the first a Sachem of the Vermillion tribe) arrived in the evening to white river Lodged comfortably under the Spreading branches of an ancient poplar, on the eastern bank. feasted next morning on a young raccoon we killed the evening before which was dressed by the indians

“Sunday morning aug^t 7th Continued our Journey in an eastward direction as we did the preceeding day until we Came to Patoka about 4 miles distance this small river appears to run a S W Course its Confluence with Wabashe is about 2 miles below the Mouth of white river after passing 2 miles up Patoka in ENE direction we Crossed and went by the Gen^l Course of that river 6 miles, in a NE direction our passage up Patoka was in a wide extended Bottom exceeding fertile Covered with abundance of grass this ground we suposed was exceeding Swampy during the Winter & Spring Season but observing higher ground for Cultivation at a Small

⁸ Journal of journey from Vincennes to Falls of Ohio, 1785. Draper MSS. 10ccb, Wisconsin Historical Society. Photostat in Indiana Historical Society Library.

distance we Concluded that this wet ground would be exceedingly interesting to the proprietor for meadow here our indians killed two raccoon in Mid day arrived at 2 P. M. at a pond whose water was good kindled a fire & prepared our prey for food.—From thence Steered a ESE Course leaving patoka after passing a mile Came upon a drain of water passing through extensive pararies, interspersed as by art, with groves and long reaches of different Species of trees and Covered richly with grass that almost Concealed our horses passing through. No good water, traveled this afternoon about 3 miles and encamped near the afors^d drain lodged Comfortably. Next Morning aug^t 8th Continued our Journey through the pareries, on an easterly Course, after passing about 3 miles We Came over a number of small drains which soon formed a large Channel and by its meanders Sometimes NE & at others . . . east we passed down a large Bottom for about 6 Miles until we came to a large Channel by the indians Called Big river and little water therein Shortly after passing this our guides killed a fine Buck our Course from this about east for 3 miles to Blue river this river is 114 y^d. wide here Crossed it at right angles this river appears to run a SW & S Course Big river affors^d a S cour[se] Joins it at 5 miles below our Crossing. On the easterly Bank of blue river kindled a fire and dined on a part of the buck we had killed. afterward proceeded by direction of our guides eastwardly by about 5 miles up Blue river which a little above where we dined made a turn—its Course N of West left the river in the evening which their appeared to be a NE Course from us and Continued our former Course a Small distance, and encamped the weather serene lodged comfortably and next morning (being Tuesday aug^t 9th) Continued our Journey eastward, passed Some hilly land, and Some low level ground not Very fertile which was much Cut by Water—and at Some Seasons might Contain large Streams, but was now almost dry; one of them directing its Course eastward, we passed down the Same, by its meanders. Great difficulty in Crossing the Cuts and passing through Brambly woods. bad water, and Scarce. left the affores^d Creek to the right hand and progressing about 4 miles further encamped. about noon we

killed a monstrous bear, kindled a fire this evening and prepared Some food. this day our Journey Might be 20 miles lodged Comfortably and next morning Wednesday Aug^t 10th Continued our Journey East 2 miles, when Coming to a path our guides went on it North 2 1/2 miles and afterwards directed their Course NE which in about 10 miles travel from morning brought us to Blue river again here we arrived about noon & Dined on the bank. In the afternoon Steered eas[t]ward and after passing about 6 miles in that direction Came into thickets almost impassable and was obliged to go north to extricate ourselves and accidentally found a fine Spring the Stream of which ran but a little distance then we encamped Our Journey this day might be 15 miles a great deal of good limestone land full of Sinks and badly water[ed] From the Sinking Spring thursday aug 11th we Continue our Journey east 3 miles to Deer Creek Crossed it Nearly at right angles. Continued our Course 2 miles further, and Came near blue river again. We then directed our Course ESE & passing a M further Crossed Deer Creek which appeared to run a NW Course Continued ESE 2 miles further and Crossed Stoney Creek which directed its Course as the affors^d passed on our ESE Course 1/2 miles further crossed a Small Branch and then encamped for Dinner at 12 O'Clock thin Stream run into Ohio River & the land through which we passed fertile & level except Sinks holes & not many Springs Continued our Course ESE in the afternoon 3 miles and encamped on a Branch which directed its Course to the [MS. illegible] near which we killed a monstrous he Bear and [MS. illegible] part of it four our provision this day our journey might be [MS. illegible] miles Much water. Friday morning 12th day of aug^t Steered a SE Course and Soon passed the dividing ridge which divide the waters that fall into ohio from them that fall into Blue river after passing 6 miles Came upon a Creek that runs S into ohio passed about noon over the head branches of another Creek passed many brushy Pararies and encamping at noon had traveled about 12 miles the land in large good but badly watered traveled this afternoon about 6 M & Camped on a Branch of Indian C Saturday morning, Aug 13, passed down the Branch to indian Creek down which we pass a little way but finding it not

[MS. illegible] our Course, it being SE we cross^d it and Soon Came into exceeding brushy Pararies almost impassable distress^d for water altered our Cours to S, and passing about 3 miles Came to a large branch of Indian Creek that run a SW Course we Steered from this a SSE Course but after passing 3 miles Came into the brushy pareries, our old Chief then directed his course E, and Came in the even[*in*]g on a large Branch of the last S^d branch killed a turkey We here encamped our Journey this day not more than [MS. blank] We Spread our tent. a wet night lay tolerably well. Sunday morning aug^t 14 Continued our Journey SE passing about 3 miles Came upon a Branch of Silver Creek traveled 4 miles on this Branch and Came to the main Branch which run SSE leaving it to the right hand Cross a branch that run west to meet the other here we Changed our Course to S. 3 miles & encamped. This day we traveled about 18 miles generally good land but badly watered Sunday night rested well. Monday morning aug 15th Continued our Journey S. endeavoring to find Ohio."

Filson returned to Vincennes by water on his trading journey, arriving about Christmas time. The Indians in the region north of the Ohio were becoming increasingly hostile to the Americans at the Post, and he found the little town isolated and in a high state of alarm. The breach between the French and the Americans seemed widened rather than otherwise by the Indian treacheries against the latter.

On March 16, 1786, Filson joined with some of the Americans in an appeal to George Rogers Clark to march again to the Wabash and relieve the inhabitants. On the first of June he prepared a petition to Congress on behalf of the Americans, stating that they were exposed "daily to danger and frequent death" and in need of military protection.⁹

That same night Filson came near death himself. Determined to carry back firsthand news of the distress of the settlement, he and three companions left Vincennes and started

⁹ Helderman, Leonard C. (ed.), "Danger on the Wabash; Vincennes Letters of 1786," in *Indiana Magazine of History*, XXXIV (1938), 456-58. See also Helderman, "John Filson's Narrative of his Defeat on the Wabash, 1786," in *Filson Club History Quarterly*, XII (1938), 187-88.

down the Wabash bound for Louisville. Near the mouth of White River they were spied by a party of Indians. Two of Filson's companions were killed outright, but the third hid himself beneath a fallen tree. Filson escaped into the woods, and his pursuers, either confused by his circuitous movements or diverted by a supply of "spirituous liquor" on board the abandoned boat, gave up the chase.¹⁰

After a ten-day recuperation Filson decided to set out for the Falls by the overland trail. He started on the night of June 12. "The moon shone with a agreeable lustre," he wrote,¹¹ "and, accompanied a small distance by some of our most valuable friends, we directed our course for the falls of Ohio; and during the nocturnal hours traveled about fifteen miles: Although every step was disagreeable through brushy woods, and swampy grounds, yet safety from savages, afforded us some pleasure: next day rafted over White river, A. M., continuing our course one and a half point south of east; concluding ourselves out of the reach of the savages lurking around the Post.

"The country lying between the Post and Louisville or Clarksville has a diversity of soil and timber and this being my second tour, suppose myself able to form a good judgment thereof; which for the information and satisfaction of my gentle reader for whose sake I write; have delineated my two journeys on my map of the country, which from my own and some others observation I rest assured, is the best that can be given at this day. The explanation thereof, with the plan annexed, points out the particulars referring thereto. I concluded the journey in seven painful, days and arrived safe at the falls of Ohio."

¹⁰ Helderman, "John Filson's Narrative of his Defeat on the Wabash, 1786," in *Filson Club History Quarterly*, XII, 188-90. This narrative is printed with some modification in Durrett, Reuben T., *John Filson, The First Historian of Kentucky . . .* (*Filson Club Publications Number One*, Louisville, 1884), pp. 58-65.

¹¹ Helderman, "John Filson's Narrative of His Defeat on the Wabash, 1786," in *Filson Club History Quarterly*, XII, 194. As Helderman states, Filson implies that he made a map of the country between Vincennes and Louisville, but no such map has been found. Two years earlier Filson's map of Kentucky had been published. Perhaps he contemplated expanding this to include southern Indiana.

During the summer of 1786 Vincennes was besieged by a party of 450 Indians from the Upper Wabash bent on wiping out the Americans. The siege was conducted "with all the band of horrors" that usually characterized Indian encampments on such occasions. Intervention by Colonel Le Gras with the militia saved the day, but the Indians as they withdrew vowed that they would return in the fall and wipe out the town. Under this threat the French and Americans at the Post joined together in sending duplicate expresses, one by land and one by water, to General Clark at the Falls begging for aid.¹²

By August, 1786, the Indians of the whole Northwest were on the warpath. American efforts to define an Indian boundary line at Fort McIntosh the year before had alarmed them, and the British labored to increase their hostility toward the Americans. All the Americans who had settled near Vincennes and in Clark's Grant at the Falls were either killed or forced to take refuge in the towns. Travel on the Ohio and Wabash rivers was hazardous, and raiding parties crossed over into Kentucky and struck at settlements there.

Early in August, under order of the Executive Board of Virginia, field officers of the Kentucky district, determined to check the depredations and weary of waiting for action by the Confederation, met at Harrodsburg and planned an expedition to the Wabash. One half the militia, on foot or on horseback as they might choose, under the command of their county officers, were to assemble at Clarksville at the Falls. One pack horse was to be provided for every four men, as well as ammunition and provision for fifty days. The expedition was to be commanded by General Clark, who had been operating against the Indians in the Ohio country.

From the first things went badly. The draft in Kentucky met with opposition. Supplies were furnished grudgingly. By the middle of September only half the number of men expected had assembled. In the Clarksville encampment discord arose over the plan of march. Clark was for setting out directly for the Indian towns, but finally conceded to the plan of first

¹² *Ibid.*, XII, 197, 198; Helderman (ed.), "Danger on the Wabash, 1786," in *Indiana Magazine of History*, XXXIV, 458-67.

marching to Vincennes. He ordered supplies sent by keelboat down the Ohio and up the Wabash and on September 17, the troops and pack horses set out over the old trail to the Wabash.¹³ This is probably the first white troop movement of any size to use the trace, which, in subsequent movements, as we shall see, was to be referred to as "Clark's trace."

Scarcely had the march started when dissension and disorder became apparent. It took the little army seven days to go from the Falls to Vincennes, "although willing soldiers," wrote one historian,¹⁴ "could have covered the longer distance to the enemy and been at grips with them in less than half that time."¹⁵ The Lincoln troops," he continued, "whom Logan had left in command of one Colonel Barrett and who were generally drafted men, were unruly, and throughout the hot dusty march were constantly grumbling. Many of the cattle were lost on the way—a pretty sure sign of sulking neglect of duty. Captain Gaines, commanding the volunteer troops of horse from Fayette, said 'During the march, at a place called French Lick, there was a meeting of the whole of Col. James Barret's command, respecting a horse which had been taken for the adjutant general to ride. The whole of them fired off their guns in defiance of the orders of the Genl, by which the horse had been taken. The Colonel, however, was arrested, tried, and Repremanded, which delayed us for a few hours; we then marched on.' "

The disposition of the men did not improve upon reaching Vincennes. The keelboats carrying stores and supplies were delayed by low waters and for nine days the restless troops waited—hunger and inactivity proved almost fatal. When the boats finally did arrive and it was learned that at least half

¹³ Helderman (ed.), "Danger on the Wabash, 1786," in *Indiana Magazine of History*, XXXIV, 458-67; Helderman, Leonard C., "The Northwest Expedition of George Rogers Clark, 1786-1787," in *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XXV (1938-39), 327; Bodley, Temple, *George Rogers Clark: His Life and Public Service* (Boston & New York, 1926), p. 287.

¹⁴ Bodley, *George Rogers Clark*, p. 287, quoting Captain Craig's and Captain Gaines's accounts in the Draper MSS., Wisconsin Historical Society.

¹⁵ Since it had taken Filson seven days to cover this distance, perhaps the army did not move as slowly as Bodley implies.

their cargo had been ruined by the delay or excessive heat, insubordination became increasingly open.¹⁶

Clark, with an energy remindful of his campaign against Kaskaskia and Vincennes, rallied his forces, impressed supplies, gathered volunteers from among the Americans and French at the Post, and started up the Wabash. That he had not succeeded in instilling in his men the spirit of the former campaign was soon apparent. As they approached the Indian country, most of them seemed to lose what little heart they might have had for the fight. Between three and four hundred deserted outright, and Clark, threatened with virtual mutiny, abandoned the expedition and retreated to Vincennes.¹⁷ Most of the Kentucky troops did not hesitate even here, but made for home, speeding along the old trace and reaching the Falls in a remarkably short time, considering how long they had taken to march to Vincennes. They sped past Fort Finney on the Ohio opposite Louisville in what Captain Walter Finney described as "vile disorder." Determined not to leave Vincennes completely unprotected during the winter, a board of the field officers organized a garrison which remained until the following spring.

¹⁶ Helderman, "Northwest Expedition of George Rogers Clark," in *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XXV, 327; Butler, *History of Kentucky*, p. 151.

¹⁷ See Butler, *History of Kentucky*, pp. 151-52; Helderman, "Northwest Expedition of George Rogers Clark, 1786-1787," in *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XXV, 327-28. See also Josiah Harmar to the Secretary of War, in Smith, William Henry (ed.), *The St. Clair Papers. The Life and Public Services of Arthur St. Clair* . . . (2 volumes. Cincinnati, 1882), II, 19.

HARMAR'S ROUTE

THE next important figure to leave an account of his journey across southern Indiana was General Josiah Harmar, commander of the Army of the Ohio. The winter of 1786-87 was not a happy one at Vincennes. The garrison left by Clark was maintained by impressing supplies from the citizens of the town and was undisciplined and unruly. On April 24, 1787, the Congress, upon recommendation of the Secretary of War, resolved that the commander of the Army of the Ohio should take "immediate and efficient measures for dispossessing a body of men who have in a lawless and unauthorised manner taken possession of post St Vincents in defiance of the proclamations and authority of the United States and that he employ the whole or such part of the force under his command as he shall judge necessary to effect the Object."¹

Harmar's expedition arrived at Vincennes in June, going down the Ohio to a landing opposite "Delaware Old Town," about eight miles above Green River and eighty miles below the Falls, and marching due north from there to a crossing of White River about fifteen miles below the Forks, and then to Vincennes. His orders had been to march overland from the Falls, but this trip would have required seventy pack horses at the rate of fifty cents a day, and Harmar considered so great an expense unjustified.²

This five-day march through the woods seems to have followed the course of the old Red Banks Trace that ran from the site of Henderson, Kentucky, to Vincennes. It was far from an agreeable journey. Before disembarking for their overland journey each of the men drew a sixteen-pound ration of flour which he had to transport on his back along with his arms. "Commenced our march early in the morning

¹ *Journal of the Continental Congress, 1774-1789* (34 volumes. Library of Congress edition. Washington, D. C., 1904-37), XXXII, 231. See also Secretary of War to Harmar, April 26, 1787, Harmar Papers, V, William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan.

² Harmar to Secretary of War, in Smith (ed.), *The St. Clair Papers*, II, 23-24.

[July 11],” wrote Joseph Buell, one of the party. “The weather is extremely hot, and the men weary and faint. Many of them threw away their flour. During the first day, I carried my load of flour; but after that put it on a pack horse. We were seven days on the march, and had a fatiguing, tedious tour of it—suffering much from want of water. The troops marched in four columns, in the most perfect order, with a drummer at the head of each; to give and answer signals for the halting and forward movements of the divisions.”³

Consideration of the wilderness through which these columns passed makes it doubtful that such perfect order was maintained as this indicates. Major Ebenezer Denny’s “Military Journal” gives a sketch of the plan of march which is indeed elaborate.⁴ It shows four columns headed by drums and flanked on either side by a “sub flank” and an “out flank.” Cattle and horses were placed in the middle, and there was a rear guard composed of a sergeant and twelve men. Under date of July 13, Denny recorded that they passed through “a level open country. Buffalo numerous in the woods. Several seen standing and gazing at the men, appearing to hearken to the drum.” The next day they passed through a “thicket of plum and rose bushes.” “Opened our way through,” he wrote. “Some delay and disorder. Columns unable to keep their proper distances. Cattle scattered. Halted until the cattle were collected.”⁵

Harmar described Vincennes as a town of “near four hundred houses—log and bark—out-houses, barns, etc.; the number of inhabitants, about nine hundred souls, French, and about four hundred souls, Americans.”⁶ The sudden rise in the American population he attributed to a migration from

³ “Journal of Joseph Buell,” in Hildreth, Samuel P., *Pioneer History: Being an Account of the First Examination of the Ohio Valley . . .* (Cincinnati, 1848), p. 154. See also Harmar to Secretary of War, August 7, 1787, in Smith (ed.), *The St. Clair Papers*, II, 27.

⁴ Denny, William H., “Military Journal of Major Ebenezer Denny, . . . with an Introductory Memoir,” in Historical Society of Pennsylvania, *Memoirs*, VII (1860), 304.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Harmar to Secretary of War, August 7, 1787, in Smith (ed.), *The St. Clair Papers*, II, 27.

Kentucky, observing that "many of General Clarke's militia on their march toward the Vermillion town, had cast their eyes on choice lands, and . . . had made what they called tomahawk rights."⁷

Harmar visited posts in Illinois and returned to Vincennes where he met the Wea and Piankashaw in council. Leaving Major John F. Hamtramck with a garrison of ninety-five men, he set out for the Falls on the first of October with a company of seventy-one.

Buell, who was of the company, remarked that this march was more pleasant than the one up to Vincennes had been, but still fatiguing.⁸ Harmar in his report to the Secretary of War stated:⁹ "We marched along what is called Clarke's Trace, and arrived on the 7th October at the Rapids of the Ohio. I was mistaken, in a former letter, concerning the distance; it is about one hundred and thirty miles.¹⁰ We saw no Indians or signs of Indians. From the Falls to the Post the country is generally hilly, and good wheat land."

A comparison of distances mentioned in Harmar's diary and Major Denny's "Journal" is interesting. Here is Harmar's account:¹¹

"October 1st—Monday—exceeding pleasant day—march this day from Post. . . .

"October 2nd—Tuesday—very fine day—march'd this Day and cross'd the west fork of White river just above its junction about 5 miles beyond it & there Encamp'd—This day march 16 miles—

"October 3rd—Wednesday—Very fair weather—march'd and crossed the other fork of White River . . . 25 miles.

"October 4th—Thursday—Very fine weather march'd to the Lick about 16 miles where we Encamped. Great quantity of Bufalo at this Lick—

⁷ Smith (ed.), *The St. Clair Papers*, II, 29.

⁸ Hildreth, *Pioneer History*, pp. 157-58.

⁹ Harmar to the Secretary of War, November 24, 1787, in Smith (ed.), *The St. Clair Papers*, II, 34.

¹⁰ In a letter to the Secretary of War, May 14, 1787, Harmar stated the distance from the Falls to Vincennes by land to be about ninety miles. *Ibid.*, II, 21.

¹¹ Harmar Papers, William L. Clements Library.

"October 5th—Marched from the Lick to within 8 miles of the Blue River—This days march about 18 miles—

"October 6th. Saturday—very fine weather. March'd and crossed the blue River and Encamp'd in the barrens—this days march 25 Miles—no water for 12 miles—

"October 7th. Sunday—rainy day. Marched across the Nobs and struck the fort at about a march of 21 miles this day. Total distance from this Post to the falls of the Ohio by what is called *Clark's trace* I make to be about 130 Miles—"

Major Denny's account follows:¹²

"Oct. 1st.—Set out with the commandant and the two companies; marched to a branch of the river De Shay, supposed to be nine miles.

"2d—Crossed the west fork of White river and encamped on a branch, 20

"3d.—Crossed and encamped on north fork of White river, 24

"4th.—Reached the Great Lick, 18

"5th.—Branch of Patoka, 16

"6th.—Branch of Blue river, 25

"7th.—Rapids, 18

130

"In this route we pursued General Clark's trace, made a twelvemonth ago, on his way against the Wabash Indians. First and second day passed through tolerable land; third day very indifferent, owing to the path keeping about three and four miles distant, for thirty miles up the north fork of White river, which led us through neither rich nor level land, but just across the heads of gullies leading into White river. Fourth day's march, passed over a great deal of good land, particularly near the Great Lick, which is not far distant from the road. When within a few miles of the Lick, our hunters had leave to go ahead. Presently heard the report of both their guns, and in a few minutes five buffaloes made their appearance, bearing furiously toward the head of the column. When within fifty

¹² "Military Journal of Major Ebenezer Denny," in Historical Society of Pennsylvania, *Memoirs*, VII, 312-13.

paces, the men in front were permitted to fire; this turned the heads of the animals; they passed along and received the fire of the whole line. Three only were shot down, near the rear, where they approached within twenty paces. Fifth day's march, through pretty good land. Sixth, barren. Seventh, broken with knobs and small mountains, until we got within seven or eight miles of the Rapids, when the land became level and of the first quality."

Back at Vincennes Major Hamtramck carried on until the organization of Knox County in 1790. Under his supervision a more orderly condition of affairs prevailed, but it was no easy job to steer a wise course through the local political feuds. He issued a proclamation prohibiting the sale of intoxicating liquor to the Indians, took steps to improve the local government, and heartily recommended the establishment of stronger authority by the General Government.

Antoine Saugrain, a French scientist and physician, was at the post in 1788. He found the situation healthy, the climate good—very like that of Paris, save colder. Prices were high. The inhabitants, most of whom were French, devoted their time to the chase. Their gardens were poor, and cattle was obtainable only at the Falls, and had to be brought from there. "The danger from the savages is nothing according to what they say," he wrote, "but for me, I would not have a dwelling more than a mile or two from the village and with two good neighbors. It is very hard to bring merchandise, etc., overland from the Falls, for we passed over the road only with great difficulty. By water it is simple enough, and a fairly large boat with six oars can be brought up easily."¹³

¹³ Translated from Seltier, H. Fouré (ed.), *L'Odyssée Américaine D'Une Famille Française. Le Docteur Antoine Saugrain . . .* (Institut Français de Washington. Baltimore, 1936), pp. 54-57.

HECKEWELDER'S ACCOUNT

UNDER the Ordinance of 1787 the capital of the Northwest Territory was established at Marietta with Arthur St. Clair as governor. Two and a half years later Knox County was organized as part of the Territory with Vincennes as its capital. Indecisive Indian campaigns marked the first years of the new regime. Soldiers and messengers followed the old trail to and from the Indian towns and camps, and between Vincennes and Marietta.

In 1792 a party of Indian chiefs escorted by a Moravian missionary passed that way. Following St. Clair's defeat by the Indians in 1791, effort was concentrated on settling the Indian troubles by negotiation, and in September, 1792, General Rufus Putnam met with the Wabash Indians in council at Vincennes. The meetings were amiable, but the terms as finally agreed to were so vague that the treaty was never ratified by the Senate. The Indians acknowledged the grants to the French at Vincennes, but insisted that the Ohio River remain forever the boundary between the Indians and the Americans. After negotiations were concluded, Putnam planned to escort several of the chiefs to Philadelphia to meet the President; but when the time for departure came, Putnam was too ill to travel, and it was arranged that John Heckewelder, a Moravian missionary to the Indians who had accompanied Putnam to Vincennes, should go with them to Marietta where they would wait for Putnam.

On the sixth of October Heckewelder and the chiefs, with guides and hunters, set out on the old trail to the Falls. On the first day of the journey¹ they passed "through a fine rich level country" inhaling "the pleasant odor of quantities of ripe persimmons," and crossed the White River. The hunters shot five wild turkeys. The next day they passed along the East Fork of the White River through a wilderness of grape-

¹ See "Narrative of John Heckewelder's Journey to the Wabash," in *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, XII, 173-74.

vines and bushes. A buffalo estimated to weigh eight hundred pounds was killed. The third day they marched "through a wilderness and over steep, disagreeable mountains." The next day they passed by a salt lick, probably French Lick, and shortly thereafter the hunters fired into a herd of buffalo that bore down on them, killing one and wounding another. In the evening the party feasted on buffalo meat and several of the Indians made such gluttons of themselves that they became sick. On the eleventh, a thunderstorm broke and the rain fell in torrents. "We were only 18 miles from Fort Steuben,"² wrote Heckewelder, "but in a neighborhood through which the Miami warriors frequently pass on their way to Kentucky and are also frequently pursued by those from there. We had cause for anxiety, viz., that if the warriors had recently committed ravages in Kentucky and they were pursued, our Indians would have to pay the penalty. For this reason Mr. Prior spoke with them and the guides, and commanded a forced march. We had scarcely proceeded half a mile when a similar thundergust overtook us; it continued so long, that at 1 o'clock at night, when we arrived at Clarkville and I stepped down from my horse, the water oozed out at the tops of my boots, although I wore two great coats, one over the other and I tried to protect myself as well as possible." The journey from the Falls to Marietta was made on the Ohio in canoes.

² At the site of Jeffersonville, Indiana, formerly called Fort Finney.

TRAVELERS' ACCOUNTS

PEACEFUL negotiations with the savages failing, a campaign under Anthony Wayne was launched against the Miami which ended in decisive victory for the Americans at Fallen Timbers in 1794. The Treaty of Greenville which followed Wayne's victory ushered in a period of comparative peace from Indian hostilities. All the lands within the present bounds of Indiana, with the exception of six defined areas, remained in Indian hands. One of these was the town of Vincennes and the adjacent land. Another was the tract of 150,000 acres at the Rapids of the Ohio designated as the Illinois Grant or Clark's Grant. This latter reservation was made by Virginia when she deeded her lands in the Northwest to the United States, with the stipulation that it be divided among General Clark and the soldiers of his Kaskaskia-Vincennes expedition of 1778.

Now would-be settlers, less fearful of Indian war parties, streamed across the mountains into Kentucky and sailed down the Ohio bound for Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, and Illinois. Water routes were far cheaper and easier for settlers encumbered with household goods, and the old trail across southern Indiana probably did not accommodate many of them on their westward journeys. However, as the two settled areas of southern Indiana, Clarksville and Clark's Grant and Vincennes and its neighborhood, comprised its termini, it was used more and more by the established settlers.

Clarksville, the little town at the Falls, had been laid out under an act of the Virginia General Assembly in October, 1783. The purchaser of each half-acre lot was required to build, within three years of purchase, a house twenty by eighteen feet, with a brick or stone chimney.¹ Despite careful plans and ambitious prospects the town did not prosper. It accommodated travelers bound for Vincennes and served as a point of departure for troops going into the Indian country.

¹ Dillon, John B., *History of Indiana* . . . (Indianapolis, 1859), p. 180.

But one writer disposed of it thus airily: "Clarksville, a small settlement in the N. W. territory, which contained, in 1791, about 60 souls. It is situated on the northern bank of the Ohio, opposite Louisville, a mile below the Rapids, and 100 miles S. E. of Post Vincent. It is frequently flooded, when the river is high, and inhabited by people who cannot, at present, find a better situation."² Governor St. Clair paused there on his way to Kaskaskia in 1790 and established civil authority by appointing William Clark a justice of the peace and a captain in the militia.

The era of peace following the Treaty of Greenville brought to the western country an influx of European travelers and scientists who visited the towns, studied the climate, soil, vegetation, and animal life, and the economic possibilities of the new country, and wrote accounts of their findings, journals of their travels, and guidebooks for future emigrants.

The French botanist André Michaux made excursions into the western country from 1793 to 1796, and upon one of his journeys passed over the old trail from the Falls to Vincennes. His brief comments are interesting.³

"Sunday 9th of August 1795, started from Louisville and slept at Clarksville. Two miles from Louisville on the opposite Bank of the Ohio.

"The 10th we set out and arrived at Post Vincennes situate on the Wabash River on Thursday the 13th of August in the evening. The distance is considered to be one hundred and twenty-five Miles. On the day of our arrival we crossed a River about 20 miles before reaching Post Vincennes and although the Waters were then very low we were on the point of making a Raft for the Country is not inhabited along this Road. Of all the Journeys I have made in America in the past 10 years this is one of the most difficult owing to the quantity of Trees overturned by storms, to the thick brushwood through which one is obliged to pass; to the numbers of Flies by which one is devoured, etc.

"The 14th, 15th and Sunday the 16th of August I was

² Morse, Jedidiah, *The American Gazetteer* . . . (Boston, 1797).

³ Michaux, André, "Journal of Travels into Kentucky; July 15, 1793-April 11, 1796," in Thwaites (ed.), *Early Western Travels*, III, 66-67.

obliged to rest having arrived almost ill. My horse, while trying to jump over the trunk of a large fallen tree, fell and threw me a great distance and I suffered for several days from an injury to the lower part of the Chest on the left side because the trigger of my gun had struck there."

By this time, Michaux was a hardened explorer and traveler, having botanized through the swamps of Florida and the wilds of the Hudson's Bay country. That he should comment so forcibly on the difficulties of Indiana travel indicates that the trail was a poor one indeed and that travel along that way was not easy.

The next year, 1795, another Frenchman, Constantin Volney, came to America and left a record of his survey of the climate and soil and the aborigines of the places he visited. In his travels by the old trail across southern Indiana, he crossed the Ohio at Louisville and waited eight hours until "a caravan . . . of four or five horsemen" had assembled, which was "necessary to travel upwards of 100 miles of woods and meadows, so desart as not to contain a solitary hut." The loneliness of the journey seemed to weigh on him. ". . . I traversed one hundred and twenty miles of forest, from Louisville, near the rapids of Ohio, to Vincennes, on the Wabash, without lighting on a hut, and, what surprised me still more, without hearing the voice of a bird, though in the month of July." The caravan moved rapidly through the wilderness and reached Vincennes in three days.⁴

During the winter of 1796-97 Moses Austin, merchant and mine owner in the East, father of Stephen F. Austin, founder of the first American colony in Texas, journeyed out to southern Missouri to make a reconnaissance of the lead mines there. Late in December he reached Louisville, which he described as a town of about 30 houses, none of them "elegant," and affording the traveler no tavern that deserved "a better name than that of Grog Shop." Its situation he found "beautiful," but he felt that the "handy work of Man

⁴ Volney, Constantin F., *A View of the Soil and Climate of the United States of America* . . . ([Philadelphia] 1804), pp. 331-32. The map facing page 1 shows a road from Clarksville to Vincennes.

has insted of improving destory.d the works of Nature and made it a detestable place.”⁵

After this damning pronouncement he left the sorry evidence of man’s “handy work” and plunged with his two companions into the wilderness of southern Indiana. He crossed the Ohio partly by boat⁶ and partly on the ice and spent the night of December 29 at Clarksville. Here is his account of the journey to Vincennes:⁷

“Clerks Ville is a poor place hardly Deserving Notice consisting of Six Cabbins and One Logg Hous with a Stone chimney. its 3 Miles from Louis Ville. up the Ohio from Clerks Ville is a small Fort Command.d by Lieut. Webster with 45 or 50 men.”⁸

“30th. at Day light I made myself ready to take the Trace to Post St. Vincennes, but unfortunate for me a Very heavy snow fell in the night which had so obscured the Trace that not a foot Step could be seen. thus Situated I was at a stand, but beeing informed that the Trees had been mark.d, by keeping of which I could finde the way, with this information I left the Ohio and that Evening arriv.d safe at Blue river 30 Miles from Clerks Ville on the banks of which I found an Indian Camp of Wyandots fifteen in Number with an Old Cheef. I Staid the Night and was Treat.d with great Politeness and friendship. the Cheef ordered a Squah to Dress my supper, which she did in a short time nor do I remember to have ever eaten a better Dish of Veneson and Bare Stake. at Day light he ordered his Squah to do the same, and after takeing my Brakefast I took leave of the

⁵ Garrison, George P. (ed.), “A Memorandum of M. Austin’s Journey from the Lead Mines in County of Wythe in the State of Virginia to the Lead Mines in the Province of Louisiana West of the Mississippi, 1796-1797,” in *American Historical Review*, V (1899-1900), 527.

⁶ On June 16, 1796, Andrew Heath was granted a licence to operate a ferry across the Ohio from Clarksville. Perhaps it was his boat that Austin used. Carter, Clarence E. (ed.), *The Territorial Papers of the United States* (volumes I- , Washington, D. C., 1934-), III, 445.

⁷ Garrison (ed.), “A Memorandum of M. Austin’s Journey,” in *American Historical Review*, V, 527-28.

⁸ Fort Finney, later Steuben, at the site of Jeffersonville. See previous mention of Clarksville, *ante*, p. 208.

friendly Wyandots presenting to the Two Squahs that had attend me each a String of Beeds.

“31th I arriv.d at Night at a Camp said to be 36 Miles from Blue river which had been made use of the Night before by a Company of men which I pass.d in the Day from St Vincennes bound to Kentucky. this Day I come up and meet with a number of Hunting Indians all of which were friendly. the Snow beeing deep and the weather Cold I did not sleep so well as I could have wished and by times I started on my road determined that Night to reach Vincennes but after a hard Days ride I late at Night arriv.d at Mr Harvis 5 miles from Vincennes where I found good quarters.

“The Country from the Ohio to Vincennes is in general good and will afford Valuable settlement and is Well water.d. the Onely River at which a Traveller is subject to meet with Delay or difficulty in passing, is Blue river which in the spring is commonly high. At White River there is a good Boat at which you may pass at any time or on the Ice which was the way I pass.d all the waters from the Ohio to Vincennes. the severety of the winter had mad[e] all the rivers passable on the Ice. White River is a delightfull River and navigable for the Boats Most parts of the Year 150 mils up. its about 260 Yards wide where I pass.d it and I was told the Currint is moderate and the Navegation as easy as any River in the Western World. this River may be Forded in summer At the Delaware Village about a Mile and half above the road but its attended with great Danger the whole of the River from side to side beeing a quick sand, and I was told by a Number of Gentl.^m that sundry Horses was lost last Summer in attempting the forde by those unacquainted with It. the Indian Village Just mention.d I was inform.d contained about 20 famelies which have return.d to it with in the last Year after an absence of Ten Years.

“1th January, 1797 on Monday I arriv.d at the Town of St Vincennes which I found to be much larger then I had an Idea of, the situation is quite Charming nor can fancy paint a more desireable Spot.

“From Harvies to Vincennes five Miles is an Open Champaign Country and Extremely fertile interspersed with

Island of Trees and plains or prairies quite to the banks of the Wabash."

Austin reveals two interesting facts about the old trail. In the first place, by this time, it was marked so that a stranger could follow it without fear of going astray.⁹ Secondly, there was a boat of some sort available at the White River crossing. Perhaps this was Joshua Harbin's ferry, which was established about this time on White River northwest of the later site of White Oak Springs, now Petersburg.¹⁰

Austin described Vincennes as having two hundred houses, which were generally small, badly finished one-storied affairs. Only three-quarters of them were inhabited, since the Greenville Treaty had freed the neighborhood of Indian threats and the Americans had gone out to their farms. The town, however, seemed to show promise of future prosperity. Its society he found agreeable, and Mr. Small's tavern, the only one in town, offered him agreeable service. On the fifth of January he set out for Kaskaskia.

After the organization of the territory a new group of men passed over the crude trails and traces of the Northwest in all seasons and all kinds of weather. These were the judges and barristers who attended the General Court held at the various seats of justice.

⁹ The road was probably marked by blazes where slices of bark were chopped off the trunks of the trees along the way. Some years later one traveler observed that when a new road was surveyed, the trees were cut and the stumps were left to rot. Then the trees on each side of this pathway were blazed to distinguish it from a private road leading to a farm. Blazed roads were called open roads. See Fordham, Elias Pym, *Personal Narrative of Travels in Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky . . . 1817-1818*, edited by Frederick A. Ogg (Cleveland, 1906), pp. 100-1 and note. Another traveler noted that the traces marked by notching the bark of the trees—one notch for a foot path, two for a bridle path, and three for a wagon road. Harris, William Tell, *Remarks Made During a Tour Through the United States of America, in the Years 1817, 1818, and 1819* (London, 1821), p. 139n.

¹⁰ See map in Margaret Story Jean and Aline Jean Treanor, "The First Families of White Oak Springs," in *Indiana Magazine of History*, XXI (1935), 291. On June 23, 1796, two ferry licenses were issued to Robert Buntin, clerk of Knox County, "for the Convenience of Knox County." Perhaps Harbin received one of these. Carter (ed.), *Territorial Papers*, III, 445.

Their journeys were unavoidably hard and wearing. The judges and lawyers, in parties of five or six, traveled on horseback from one court to another, through woods uninterrupted by any habitation except an occasional Indian village. With so few roads open, their routes were necessarily circuitous, and it often required six, eight, or sometimes ten days to go from one county seat to another. Almost all the streams had to be forded or swum, and Jacob Burnet recalled years later that the common question when purchasing a horse was, "Is he a good swimmer?" All their supplies, including their own food and the forage for the horses, had to be taken with them on pack horses. Sometimes small quantities of corn might be purchased from the Indians.

Burnet, an energetic young man from New Jersey who settled in Cincinnati in 1796, declared that he never missed a term of the courts in Hamilton or St. Clair counties, and he must have known these old roads well. In December, 1799, he and Arthur St. Clair, Jr., decided to see whether Vincennes might be a good place for ambitious young lawyers anxious to hang out their shingles. Accompanied by Mr. Morrison, a New Englander bound for Kaskaskia, they started down the Ohio from Cincinnati and reached the Falls in four days. Here they disembarked, mounted their horses, and started for Vincennes. The following account of their journey is from Burnet's *Notes on the North-Western Territory*.¹¹

"About nine o'clock in the evening they discovered, at a little distance from the path they were traveling, a camp of four or five Indians, which they approached. After having shaken hands with them, they procured a brand of fire, and proceeded some distance further on their way, and then halted for the night. Having brushed away the snow from the spot they had selected for their camp, and collected a good supply of wood for the night, they kindled a fire, took some refreshment, wrapped themselves in their blankets, and laid down to sleep.

"The next night they encamped in a rich valley, where they found an abundance of fallen timber, which enabled

¹¹ Burnet, Jacob, *Notes on the Early Settlement of the North-Western Territory* (Cincinnati, 1847), pp. 72-74.

them to keep up a large fire through the night, before which they slept very comfortably till morning. During the night, a couple of panthers, attracted by the light of the fire, approached sufficiently near the camp, to serenade them with their unwelcome music—but kept at a respectful distance. The next day, they encountered a severe snow-storm, during which they surprised eight or ten buffalo, sheltering themselves from the storm, behind the top of a beech tree, full of dead leaves, which had fallen by the side of the ‘trace,’ and hid the travelers from their view. The tree and the noise of the wind among its leaves, prevented them from discovering the party, till they had approached within two rods of the place where they stood. They then took to their heels, and were soon out of sight. One of the company drew a pistol and fired, but without any visible effect.

“That evening they reached White river, where they found an old cabin deserted by its builder, in which a large wild cat had taken shelter, and seemed disposed, at first, to vindicate his right of possession. He was, however, soon ejected, and the travelers entered and occupied the premises without molestation, during the night, and without attempting to do personal violence or injury to the tenant they had dispossessed. The next morning they arrived at Post Vincennes, where they tarried about a week. In the mean time, Mr. Morrison proceeded westward. As soon as Messrs. S. and B. had closed their business, they set out for home, having abandoned the idea of engaging in the practice of law in that county, from a conviction that the profits of the business would not be an adequate compensation for the fatigue and loss of time to which it would subject them.

“Before they left the Post, Colonel Vigo—a French gentleman, who had been an Indian trader more than forty years, (and had in that time made and lost one or two fortunes;) but was a generous, high minded man, in all circumstances—furnished ample stores for their journey, which he constrained them to accept, including a complete apparatus for striking and kindling fires. No occurrence of importance took place on the first day. The second brought a snow-storm, which continued through the day. About noon they halted to

feed their horses and partake of some refreshment. The snow was brushed from a log by the side of the 'trace,' on which they sat down and dined sumptuously on a frozen chicken, a biscuit, and some old peach brandy, put up for them by their hospitable friend. It was their calculation when they left Vincennes, to encamp that night on Blue river, but being mistaken as to the distance, they did not reach the place till several hours after dark. The weather having then moderated, it commenced raining. . . .

"As this crossing place was the best ford on the river, it had been the common encamping ground of travelers, between the Falls and Vincennes, from the first establishment of the Post, in the year 1735, and as a matter of course, all the fuel that could be conveniently obtained, had been used up. Nothing remained in the vicinity, but the larger class of trees, which travelers, after a tedious day's journey, were not disposed to encounter, though they might have the means of felling them. After rambling through the woods in the snow, which was six or eight inches deep, they succeeded in gathering some dry limbs that had recently fallen, which they carried to the place selected for their camp, and then kindled a cheerful little fire, sufficient to boil a pot of coffee, and thaw a frozen roast chicken; but by the time their supper was finished, their stock of fuel was exhausted, and their fire went out. Thus situated, their prospects for the night were any thing but cheering—the ground covered with snow, the rain falling plentifully, and their fire extinguished.

"Determined, however, to make the best of their situation, they scraped away the snow, and with their coats and blankets wrapped themselves up as comfortably as they could, and laid down for the night. Their saddle-bags served for pillows, and their saddles were so placed as to shelter their heads. In that manner they slept as comfortably as circumstances permitted, till morning. When they rose from their beds they were as wet as they could have been if they had slept in the bed of the river. Having no fire, they made a cold breakfast, tempered it with a little peach-brandey, then saddled their horses and started for Louisville, where they arrived about dark, on Christmas evening."

MAIL ROUTE

ABOUT the time Burnet and St. Clair visited Vincennes the old trail was taking on a new significance. The settlers from Kentucky and the East longed for contacts with the places and people they had left behind. The growing communities, organized under the Federal Government and enjoying an era of peaceful prosperity, gained a self-importance which demanded services generally accorded such settlements.

On February 11, 1797, William St. Clair and others from Kaskaskia sent a memorial to the Post Office Department asking that a post road be established from Louisville by Vincennes to Kaskaskia. It was almost a year before they received a reply from Assistant Postmaster General Charles Burrall. Despite the delay, it was encouraging. While he did not mention the establishment of a post road, Burrall stated that he had determined to send the mail, by private contract, over this route once every two weeks, and asked that a suitable person in Kaskaskia be nominated to act as postmaster at that place.¹

Burrall wrote also to Worden Pope, postmaster at Louisville, asking him to execute a contract for carrying the mail to Vincennes and Kaskaskia. He then took up the matter of payment with a cautious eye on the Department's limited budget. "The distance I am informed," he wrote to Pope, "is two hundred and sixty miles, being 100 from Louisville to Vincennes and 160 from Vincennes to Kaskaskias. The average price in carrying Mails once in two weeks, thro' the United States is at the rate of two dollars and a half a mile by the year counting the distance one way. at that rate a compensation for carrying the Mail from Louisville to Kaskaskia would be six hundred & fifty Dollars for a year, and I should suppose it might well be done for that sum, as the carier would not have many tavern bills to pay on the route, if

¹ Charles Burrall to William St. Clair and others, December 14, 1797, in Carter (ed.), *Territorial Papers*, II, 633.

however the contract cannot be obtained for that sum I wish you to contract on the best terms you can provided you do not exceed the rate of seven hundred & eighty dollars a year. I should not chuse to go higher than this last sum. I am informed that the road from Louisville to Vincennes, is tollerable tho not very good, but from Vincennes to Kaskaskias the path is very good, and the whole route may be performed in six days in summer and in seven days in winter.”²

On May 2, 1798, Burrall sent a note to George Thacher, a member of the House committee on territorial affairs, enclosing petitions relative to establishment of this route as a post road. “The expediency of establishing a post road from Louisville by Vincennes to Kaskaskias,” he said, “will appear so fully from the petitions and the maps of that country that I have no doubt the committee will recommend it, if it shall appear proper to make any new post Roads this session.”³

But in March Joseph Habersham, postmaster general, wrote: “Congress have made no provision for sending a mail by Vincennes and Kaskaskias but on the personal engagements of the citizens of these places to reimburse all expences I shall send it once a month—forming a part of the Union they ought not to be left so much in the dark as to what is passing at the seat of Government.”⁴

Finally, on November 28, 1799, Habersham sent to John Rice Jones at Kaskaskia a bond and contract for carrying the mail between Louisville and Kaskaskia by Vincennes once every four weeks. Jones’s offer to perform this route for \$600 was accepted by the department.⁵ General Washington Johnston was appointed postmaster at Vincennes,⁶ and by March 21, 1800, Habersham could write: “I am glad to find the communication by Post is at length Opened to Kaskaskias. . . . I shall be glad to find that the productiveness

² Charles Burrall to Worden Pope, December 15, 1797, in *ibid.*, II, 633-34.

³ Charles Burrall to George Thacher, May 2, 1798, in *ibid.*, II, 646.

⁴ Postmaster General to James Morrison, March 21, 1799, in *ibid.*, III, 20.

⁵ Postmaster General to John Rice Jones, November 28, 1799, and to John Edgar, November 29, 1799, in *ibid.*, III, 70-71.

⁶ Johnston gave bond as postmaster in February, 1798. Postmaster General to Johnston, December 1, 1802, in *ibid.*, VII, 81.

of the Offices of Vincennes and Kaskaskias will allow of more frequent communication by Post than the present arrangement admits of, as it will give me pleasure to extend the Benefits of this useful Institution to that distant portion of the Union.”⁷

On March 22, 1800, the route between Louisville and Vincennes was established as a post road and the Postmaster General forwarded to John Rice Jones the following schedule for carrying the mail:⁸

“Leave Louisville on Thursday at 3. PM. every four weeks from the 27th Feb.

“Arrive at Vincennes on Monday noon.

“Leave Vincennes—ditto—3 PM.

“Arrive at Kaskaskias next Sunday. 10 AM.

“Returning

“Leaving Kaskaskias on Monday noon every four weeks from the 17 Feb.

“Arrive at Vincennes on Sunday noon

“Leave Vincennes at—3 PM.

“Arrive at Louisville the next Thursday 10. AM.”

The following year the route was extended to Cahokia.

How well the rider was able to keep his schedule in this early period is not known, but from difficulties he encountered a few years later, it seems probable that often he came late, if he came at all. But the mail route was launched, and this fact must have given a good deal of satisfaction to the communities it was to accommodate.

⁷ Postmaster General to General Washington Johnston, March 21, 1800, in Carter (ed.), *Territorial Papers*, III, 78-79.

⁸ Postmaster General to John Rice Jones, March 22, 1800, in *ibid.*, III, 79-80.

HARRISON AND THE TRACE

IN 1800 Indiana Territory was established with Vincennes as its capital. Vincennes and the surrounding region contained 2,497 souls, and Clark's Grant, 929. William Henry Harrison, appointed governor of Indiana Territory, did not reach the capital until January, 1801, but John Gibson, the secretary, arrived in July, 1800, and the new government got under way.

All this activity brought increased traffic and new importance to the old trace. One of Harrison's first steps was the division of Knox County and the creation of Clark, and he used the trace, now well known and fairly well defined, in outlining the boundaries of the county: "beginning at the Ohio river at the mouth of Blew River, thence up the said River to the Crossing of the same by the Road leading from Saint Vincennes to Clarks ville, thence by a direct line to the nearest part of White River thence up the said River and that branch thereof which runs toward Fort Recovery, and from the head springs of said branch to Fort Recovery, thence along the boundary line Between the Indiana, and North Western Territory, to the Ohio, thence down the same River to the place of beginning. . . ."¹

It was natural that there would now be demands for improvements in the road and for some travelers' accommodations. In February, 1802, Harrison, discussing a proposed council with the Indians in a letter to the Secretary of War, suggested that their consent be obtained to the establishment of "houses of accommodations" along the road twenty-five or thirty miles apart.² With the same idea in mind, the Vincennes

¹ Woollen, William W., et al. (eds.), *Executive Journal of Indiana Territory 1800-1816* (Indiana Historical Society Publications, III, No.3, Indianapolis, 1900), p. 97. Hereafter cited as *Indiana Territory Executive Journal*.

² Esarey, Logan (ed.), *Governors Messages and Letters* . . . (3 volumes. *Indiana Historical Collections*, volumes VII, IX, XII, Indianapolis, 1922, 1924), I, 45.

Convention of December, 1802, sent a memorial to Congress praying "that a law may be enacted granting to such persons as the Governor of the Territory may recommend, Four hundred acres of land to each in such places as the said Governor may designate, not exceeding the distance of Twenty miles from each other, on the road leading from Clark county to Knox county, and from Vincennes in the said County to the Bank of the Ohio opposite to the town of Henderson, in Kentucky; also from Vincennes to Kaskaskia, in Randolph county, and from thence to Lusk's Ferry on the Ohio, who will open good waggon roads and Establish houses of Entertainment thereon for Five Years. . . ."³

In March, 1803, the House committee to which the petition was referred held that it was inexpedient to grant land for such purposes,⁴ but apparently Harrison still hoped that something of the sort might be done. In negotiations with the Indians at Fort Wayne in June, he secured their agreement to a treaty provision granting the United States "the right of locating tracts of land . . . on the main road between Vincennes and Kaskaskias, and one other between Vincennes and Clarksville for the purpose of erecting houses of entertainment for the accommodation of travellers."⁵ But on February 17, 1804, a Congressional committee reiterated the former stand against land grants for such purposes.⁶

Travelers on the trace were still wary of Indian treacheries. Most of the way it passed through lands to which the Indians still held title and from which American settlers and hunters were excluded by treaty agreement. But it was too much to expect the land-hungry Americans to keep their settlements within the bounds of Clark's Grant and the Vincennes Tract. Also, hunters from these areas and from Kentucky invaded the Indian hunting grounds between the Falls and the Wabash. In one of his first communications as Governor

³ Dunn, Jacob P. (ed.), *Slavery Petitions and Papers* (Indiana Historical Society Publications, II, No. 12, Indianapolis, 1894), p. 464.

⁴ Quoted in Esarey (ed.), *Messages and Letters*, I, 75.

⁵ Kappler, Charles J. (ed.), *Indian Affairs. Laws and Treaties* (2 volumes. Washington, D. C., 1904), II, 65.

⁶ Esarey (ed.), *Messages and Letters*, I, 93.

of the Territory to the Secretary of War, Harrison reported that this practice had grown "into monstrous abuse," that thousands of animals had been destroyed by the Americans, and that the Indians were complaining to him "that many parts of their Country which abounded with game when the general peace was made in 1795 now scarcely contains a sufficiency to give food to the few Indians who pass through there."⁷

In trying to work out a solution to the Indian problem and also to satisfy the increasing clamor for land, the Federal Government inevitably ran into conflicts. On the one hand it aimed at peaceful and friendly relations with the Indians and on the other it strove to win cessions of more and more of their land. Acquisition of land served a two-fold purpose—it could be surveyed and sold in an orderly way to the eager settlers, and its sale supplied a source of much-needed revenue for the young Federal Government.

Harrison's policy reflected that of the Federal Government. His real compassion for the Indians and his desire to get land for American settlers determined his course. He labored to check the sale of intoxicating liquor to the savages, to win just treatment for them before the law, and to improve the system of Indian trade. On the other hand, by treaties made during his twelve years as governor, all of southern Indiana and much of the Illinois country were ceded by the Indians to the United States.

In the treaty concluded at Fort Wayne in 1803 the boundaries of the Vincennes Tract relinquished by the Indians at Greenville in 1795 were defined.⁸ Harrison next directed his attention to winning cessions from the Indians which would

⁷ *Ibid.*, I, 27.

⁸ The bounds of the tract as given by the treaty were as follows: "Beginning at Point Coupee on the Wabash, and running thence by a line north seventy-eight degrees, west twelve miles, thence by a line parallel to the general course of the Wabash, until it shall be intersected by a line at right angles to the same, passing through the mouth of White river, thence by the last mentioned line across the Wabash and towards the Ohio, seventy-two miles, thence by a line north twelve degrees west, until it shall be intersected by a line at right angles to the same, passing through Point Coupee, and by the last mentioned line to the place of beginning." Kappler (ed.), *Laws and Treaties*, II, 64.

permit travelers to go to and from the territorial capital without having to pass through Indian territory. The old trace figured large in this effort.

In August, 1804, treaties were concluded with the Delaware and Piankashaw by which the tribes ceded all claim to a three-hundred mile tract of the land lying between the Wabash and Ohio rivers and below the Vincennes Tract and the old road leading from Vincennes to the Falls of the Ohio. The treaty stipulated that the northern boundary, instead of following the winding course of the trace, should be a straight line drawn parallel to its general course, the line not to pass more than a half mile north of its most northerly bend. This put the road entirely through United States land.⁹

This treaty was greeted with great enthusiasm. The Vincennes *Indiana Gazette*¹⁰ declared that the acquirement of this tract by the United States was of "immense value," and that it would "facilitate the establishment of extensive settlements on White river, the Wabash and the Mississippi." It described it as "first rate land, plentifully watered, and abundantly supplied with good timber."

Jared Mansfield, who had come out to supervise the surveying of the Vincennes Tract, was anxious to begin work on this new area. From Vincennes he wrote to Secretary of the Treasury Gallatin, that "in the Opinion of every one [it is] a most excellent, & valuable tract. . . .

"The lands in this part of the country appear to me to be superior in general, to those of the State of Ohio; & in time must yield a great revenue to the U. States. . . . The tract lying on the road from here to Clark's Grant, is excellent farming land generally. If a good road could be opened, it would invite immigration, & raise the value of these lands, as well as those of the interior in its vicinity."¹¹

Mansfield was ordered to start the survey immediately. The first step in the undertaking was the running of the

⁹ Kappler (ed.), *Laws and Treaties*, II, 70, 72.

¹⁰ Vincennes *Indiana Gazette*, August 21, 1804, p. 2, c.4.

¹¹ Jared Mansfield to the Secretary of the Treasury, October 26, 1804, in Carter (ed.), *Territorial Papers*, VII, 233.

northern boundary line,¹² and as a preliminary to this the old Indian road had to be surveyed from the edge of Clark's Grant to the edge of the Vincennes Tract. Thus we have an actual record of this much of the old trace.

¹² Secretary of the Treasury to Jared Mansfield, March 13, and May 24, 1805, in *ibid.*, VII, 268, 290.

SURVEYORS' RECORDS OF THE TRACE

THE TASK of surveying the trace and running the Indian boundary line was assigned to deputy surveyor William Rector.¹ Surveying tours in the western country were marked with hardships and all sorts of difficulties. Hands were hard to get and keep. Rector, like every other Federal officer in the West, was hard pressed for currency with which to pay his men. Fever and ague took a toll of his crew. Water was often scarce and like food and other supplies had to be packed on horseback.²

According to his field notes Rector began the survey of the "Old Vincennes Trace Leading from the Ohio River in Clark's Grant, to Vincennes on the Wabash," on July 11, 1805: "Went to a poplar & two beeches on the bank of the Ohio river S. W. Corner to Clarks grant, & traced a line thereof N.40° W. 320 poles to two Elms & a Beech on the bank of falling Run, then measured another line thereof N 2° E 184 poles, where struck the Vincennes trace in Parker's old improvements, thence with the meanders of said trace from line of Clarks Grant."³

Before starting out Rector had secured the help of George Rogers Clark in determining the exact point at which the old road crossed the western boundary of Clark's Grant. This

¹ Besides his surveying in Indiana Rector served as surveyor of the public lands in Illinois, Missouri, and Arkansas. He was a member of Missouri's Constitutional Convention in 1820. He died in Illinois, June 6, 1826. Philbrick, Francis S. (ed.), *The Laws of Indiana Territory, 1801-1809* (Springfield, 1930), p. cclxxv, reprinted with supplementary Indiana material by the Indiana Historical Bureau in 1931.

² Rector to Jared Mansfield, July 29, 1805. The National Archives, Department of the Interior, General Land Office, Surveyor General, Northwest Territory, Letters Received. Photostat in Indiana Historical Society Library.

³ A copy of Rector's notes of the survey of the old trace are printed *post*, pp. 262-69, from "Clark Land Grant Miscellaneous Record No. 1. Land Depart. State of Indiana," State Auditor's Office, State House, Indianapolis, pp. 37-46.

point proved to be about two and a half miles from Clarksville.⁴ Rector then began his survey and reached the Freeman Line marking the eastern boundary of the Vincennes Tract in present-day Orange County, on July 16, having recorded a distance of 43 miles and 28 chains from his starting point.⁵

In his survey he recorded 222 calls, that is, he took the courses and made the measurements of 222 units of the trace. This great number of calls for the distance surveyed indicates that the course was a winding one. Rector's shortest call was one chain (66 feet), where he blazed "A Hickory 12 in dia" with the words "to C[lark's]. G[rant]. 17 M." The longest straight course he recorded was N 83° W, for almost two and a half miles. In this course he first blazed the hickory noted above, then another hickory fourteen inches in diameter, which he marked "To C. G. 18 M," and a white oak twenty inches in diameter, labeled "To C. G. 19 M."

He noted all the streams which he crossed, their width, and often the direction in which they flowed. He mentioned by name the east, middle, and west forks of Buck Creek, Big Blue River, Sullivan's Spring,⁶ and Little Blue River. Nine miles from his starting point, at a branch three links wide, he

⁴ William Rector to Jared Mansfield, July 29, 1805, *op. cit.*

⁵ Rector and the men who made the rectangular surveys used as a measure Gunther's chain or land surveyor's chain, which is 66 feet long and contains one hundred links of 7.92 inches each.

⁶ Supposed to have been named for a Daniel Sullivan who was murdered by the Indians at this spot. One account relates that about 1810 a Daniel Sullivan (b. 1775), a spy and scout for Harrison, was murdered on the trace on his way to the Falls from Vincennes. This was at a point about thirty miles from the Falls. Cranmer, Gibson Lamb (ed. and comp.), *History of Wheeling City and Ohio County, West Virginia* . . . (Chicago, 1902), pp. 129-34. Since Rector refers to Sullivan's Spring in 1805, this event must have occurred earlier than this story says. There was a Daniel Sullivan, much hated by the French and Indians, who was living at Sullivan's Station near Vincennes in 1786. Perhaps it was he who was murdered. Helderman states that this Daniel Sullivan later became sheriff of Knox County, but this may have been a son or another Daniel Sullivan. Heirs of a Daniel Sullivan of Knox County who died prior to 1797 are mentioned in *American State Papers. Public Lands* (8 volumes. Washington, D. C., 1832-1861), I, 89. See also Helderman, "Filson's Narrative of His Defeat on the Wabash," in *Filson Club History Quarterly*, XII, 195n, and "The

noted "a cabbin near the springs." At Little Blue River a gentleman by the name of Samuel E. Hay or Hays had taken up residence.

Having completed this tour Rector returned briefly to Louisville and then repaired to Vincennes toward the end of August. Upon consulting Harrison about running the boundary line above the trace, he learned that such a line had already been rendered obsolete by the Treaty of Grouseland, concluded on August 21. By this treaty the tribes ceded to the United States a tract of land lying north of the tract ceded by the Treaty of Vincennes. In the light of this circumstance Harrison told Rector that "it was not material" in what manner the line was run, but "to run it parrallel to the general course of the trace in such a manner as to pass any distance not more, than half a mile North of the most Northerly bend of the trace."⁷

Rector then made his way to the point at which the trace intersected the east line of the Vincennes tract, ran a line north on the line 118 chains, then ran a straight line S 73° 30' E to the edge of Clark's Grant, a distance of 40 miles 42 chains, showing a difference of 2 miles 76 chains from the distance recorded in his survey of the trace. "When I got to the line of Clarks Grant," he wrote to Mansfield, ". . . I found I was nearly about the same distance North of the trace as the place where I commenced the Indian boundary so that. my work. in meandering the trace and running this line agrees pretty well."⁸

It would be a difficult if not an impossible task to locate the exact course of the old trace from Rector's field notes today. Also, his notes cover only that part of it which ran from Clark's Grant into present Orange County. However, in a short time a record was made from which its course can be plotted all the way from Clark's Grant to the White River.

Northwest Expedition of George Rogers Clark, 1786-1787," in *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XXV, 324; Alvord (ed.), *Kaskaskia Records, 1778-1790*, pp. 505, 506, 508. There was also a Daniel Sullivan who worked on the Congressional surveys in southern Indiana.

⁷ Rector to Mansfield, August 29, 1805, in Carter (ed.), *Territorial Papers*, VII, 304-5.

⁸ *Ibid.*

This record is found in the field notes kept by the men who surveyed the Vincennes Tract and the area ceded by the treaties of 1804. Surveyors were ordered to record in their notes "all mines, salt springs, salt licks and mill seats . . . and all water courses mountains and other remarkable and permanent things," through which and near which their lines passed, "and also the quality of the lands." These field notes were then reduced by expert cartographers to maps of the townships surveyed. Copies of these field notes and of the maps are on file in the State Auditor's Office, State House, Indianapolis.⁹

Fortunately for us, the surveyors seemed to have included among the "remarkable" things that they were to record, the points at which their lines crossed the old trace from the Falls, and an examination of their notes furnishes a record of its course from Clark's Grant to the crossing of White River. No such record of its course through present-day Knox County is available since the survey records of the private land claims going back to the British and French periods in Knox and Pike counties do not mention the trace.

Surveyors for this area included James Sisson, Jacob Fowler, Harvey Heth, William Harris, Silas Bent, Jr., Edward W. Tupper, Augustus Stone, Ebenezer Buckingham, Jr., Levi Barber, Nahum Bent, David Sanford, Robert Stubbs, Stephen Benton, Daniel Sullivan, and Robert Buntin. In their notes they refer to the trace generally as the "Vincennes Trace," sometimes as "Louisville Trace," "Kentucky Road," "Trail Leading from Vincennes to falls of Ohio," "Indian trail," "Trail from Louisville to Vincennes," or merely a "Road." They recorded the point at which their lines intersected the trace as so many chains from a certain corner. A record of the course of the trace as given in their notes and a series of maps based on these data are presented hereafter.¹⁰

An old land office map (1808?) of Vincennes and the land lying between the Wabash and White River, shows a road

⁹ Maps showing the trace are in "Records. Surveys. U. S. Lands," V, 27, 34, 110, 116, 122, 128, 134, 136, 138, 140, 143, 146, 149, 153, 157, 181.

¹⁰ *Post*, pp. 249-61.

from White River to Vincennes which is doubtless the old trace. It follows a northwestward course across the "River du Shies" and through the Vincennes Common. This gives a record of it in Knox County.¹¹

A map of the eastern part of the Vincennes Land District made before the Jeffersonville office was established in 1807, including present-day Floyd, Harrison, and Crawford, and eastern Orange counties, shows the old trace. Section lines are marked on the map and a check between the course of the part of the trace shown here with the record left by the surveyors reveals only slight divergencies.¹²

When the surveys were made, the course of the trace out of Knox County was a little south of that followed by Clark in 1786 and Harmar in 1787.¹³ Both passed by French Lick which lies north of the trace as recorded in the surveyors' notes. Also, Harmar passed so far north that he was obliged to cross both forks of White River. That some improvement was made in the years following their expeditions—by altering and shortening the course, by marking it, and by cutting and clearing out its bed—is indicated by the shorter time in which the journey could be made. It had taken Filson nine days to go from Vincennes to the Falls in 1785, and the following year he had to spend seven days on the way. In 1786 Clark's army consumed seven days in marching to Vincennes and the following year the same length of time was taken by Harmar's party returning from the post. Heckewelder and the Indian chiefs made their trip in six days on horseback, but the last day they pressed forward under "forced march," and, in fact, did not reach Clarksville until early morning of the

¹¹ Photostat in Indiana Division, Indiana State Library.

¹² In Indiana Historical Society Library.

¹³ Elihu Barker's *Map of the State of Kentucky from Actual Survey* [1794], shows two roads from Clarksville to Vincennes. The northern route, labeled "Common Road to the Rapids," passed by a "Very Fine Salt Spring" (French Lick); it crossed the White River at the forks, Blue River, and Indian Creek. The southern route crossed the White River below the forks and Patoka River, then swung south and crossed Blue River, Beech Creek, and Indian Creek, and on to the Falls. It also shows a trace running north from the mouth of the Wabash, and another from Red Bank to Vincennes.

seventh day. André Michaux reached Vincennes in four days, Volney and Austin in three, all three traveling on horseback. St. Clair and Burnet spent three days on their way to Vincennes, and the same amount of time on their return journey to Louisville.¹⁴

In relation to present-day locations, by the surveyors' field notes the trace ran as follows: out of Clark's Grant, westward about one-quarter mile south of Mooresville or Floyd's Knobs, about one-half mile south of Galena, and three-quarters of a mile south of Greenville, below Bradford, near Crystal Barren, and through the village of Hancock. It then crossed Big Blue River at the site of the old rangers' camp, passed through the northeast corner of Crawford County, and entered Orange County about one-half mile south of the corner common to Orange, Crawford, and Washington counties. It then ran about one-half mile north of Valeene and Unionville and entered Dubois County south of Norton at a point one mile and forty-two chains north of the Base Line. It passed through the site of the rangers' camp at Cuzco, ran about one-half mile south of Crystal, then followed the present State Road 56 to Haysville, then into Pike County about one-half mile north of Otwell, passed the villages of Algiers and Alford, through Petersburg, northwest up to White River, and on to Vincennes.

¹⁴ Shorter paths or new paths were probably adopted or cut out of the forests from time to time. Harrison, who passed along this trace on his way to his land in Harrison County, ordered some alterations on it. Thereafter, it is said to have been referred to as the Governor's Trace. *History of Pike and Dubois Counties Indiana* (Chicago: Goodspeed Bros. & Co., 1885), p. 477; Esarey, Logan, *The Indiana Home* (R. E. Banta, Crawfordsville, Ind., 1943), pp. 15-16.

THE TRACE AND THE VINCENNES *WESTERN SUN*

DESPITE the role the trace was playing in Indiana Territory and the improvements made on it, in 1804 it was still nothing more than a crude path about two feet wide. Edward Hempstead, a young attorney who came out to Vincennes that year, reported to Jared Mansfield that "the journey from Louisville here would be somewhat disagreeable to a Female—, Perhaps you Sir might not think so, but I am positive, that Mrs. Mansfield could not easily reconcile herself to the inconveniences of it—You are obliged to furnish yourself at Louisville with provisions for yourself and forage for your horses, as there is no place at which they can be obtained on the road.

"The journey is commonly performed in three days, at night you are obliged to lodge on the ground—and the whole way is nothing but a wilderness, with no road but a good foot path—"¹

Shortly before Hempstead's arrival, the little town on the Wabash, the official seat of the government of a vast territory and connected with the eastern states by a "regular" post route, attracted the attention of a young newspaper man in Lexington, Kentucky. Elihu Stout had worked on the *Kentucky Gazette* and was anxious to try his hand at editing his own newspaper. He came to Vincennes in 1803, and with the help of Harrison managed to bring a printing outfit to Vincennes the next year by way of the Ohio and Wabash rivers. Securing paper on which to print the news proved to be a great problem. The first paper mill in the western country was at Georgetown, in Scott County, Kentucky, and Stout had to transport the supply for his weekly issue by pack horse over the old trace from the Falls.

The date of the first issue of the paper under the title *Indiana Gazette* is not definitely known since no copy has

¹ Edward Hempstead to Jared Mansfield, July 30, 1804, in *Bulletin of the Chicago Historical Society*, II, No. 1 (March, 1936), p. 26.

survived. The second number appeared on August 7, 1804, and the paper continued weekly until April, 1806, when the printing plant was destroyed by fire. An interval of over a year elapsed; then on July 4, 1807, the first issue of the Vincennes *Western Sun* appeared. Elihu Stout had refused to be defeated. After the fire he had returned to Kentucky and acquired a new press and fresh supplies of paper. This time he transported all equipment by pack horse over the old trace. Arrived at Vincennes he set up shop and started publication under the new name. But for many years after the newspaper was launched, the editor was often forced to cut down the size of the sheet and to apologize to his customers for the failure of his fresh supply of paper to arrive.²

Mr. Stout's weekly issue was closely linked with the arrival of the post rider, for it was devoted almost entirely to news from the East and from abroad. If the mail failed to come, it meant scrabbling through the already exhausted, stale mail of weeks before in order to fill up the four pages. In 1800, as we have seen, Vincennes was scheduled to receive a mail once every four weeks. The next year Postmaster General Habersham contracted for a weekly mail between Louisville and Vincennes at the rate of \$600 a year. Charles Floyd was the contractor. The route between Vincennes, Kaskaskia, and Cahokia was to be made every fortnight.³ In considering the Louisville-Vincennes route, Habersham observed to the postmaster at Louisville that "the distance . . . is one hundred & ten miles the average rate of a weekly mail on horseback is five dollars reckoning the distance one way of course the average compensation would be five hundred & fifty dollars a year for that route.—as there may be some inconvenience & extraordinary expence in travelling through a country quite unsettled and without accommodations I have fixed the compensation at a sum beyond what is usually allowed for a weekly mail through the United States. . . ."⁴

² Denehie, Elizabeth M., "Indiana's First Newspaper," in *Indiana Magazine of History*, XXXI (1935), 125-30.

³ Carter (ed.), *Territorial Papers*, VII, 30, 32, 33, 34.

⁴ Postmaster General to Thomas M. Winn, September 25, 1801, in *Ibid.*, VII, 33. In 1805 and 1807 contracts were made with John Springer and

Despite the official increase in the number of mails, the route did not fare well. The opening line of Harrison's letter to the Secretary of War of July 7, 1802, read: "The mail which will carry this letter is the first from this place, since the month of March last. . . ."⁵

In December, 1802, the following schedule had been sent to William Prince, then postmaster at Vincennes: "Leave Vincennes every Friday at 2 pm Arrive at Louisville on Monday at 4 pm Leave Louisville returning every Tuesday 8 AM Arrive at Vincennes on Friday . . . 10 am."⁶

This was the schedule in force when Mr. Stout began his journalistic enterprise. On paper it all looked very well ordered, but there order ended. The Vincennes mail depended on the arrival of the post from the East by Pittsburgh and the Ohio or by Lexington, Kentucky. Weather conditions—blizzards, rain, floods—brought delays and played havoc with the neat little schedule. Other matters interfered as the following crisp note from the Postmaster General to Prince indicates: "Yours of the 5th is before me.—I stated your complaints to the contractor and requested him to be diligent & punctual. In return he complains you detain the rider contrary to right which to prevent I have enclosed a copy of his present schedule."⁷

"We have had no mail for the last two weeks," apologized the harrassed editor of the Vincennes *Western Sun* to his subscribers on January 27, 1808, "for which we shall not pretend to assign the cause—we have consequently nothing new on the subject of peace or war."⁸ Complaints reached headquarters and the Postmaster General dispatched another note to the Vincennes postmaster which gives a pretty good idea of the trouble this time: "The rider from your office to Louisville faild to arrive at Louisville Jan. 16th—Jan 23^d—and Jan. 30th [1808], the regular days fix,d for him to arrive—but

Thomas T. Davis, respectively, for carrying the mail between Louisville and Vincennes for \$550. *Ibid.*, VII, 299, 483.

⁵ Esarey (ed.), *Messages and Letters*, I, 49.

⁶ Carter (ed.), *Territorial Papers*, VII, 80.

⁷ *Ibid.*, VII, 84.

⁸ Vincennes *Western Sun*, January 27, 1808, p. 1, c. 3.

he arrivd Within that period once. viz on the 25th it is allegd that his excessive drinking is in part the cause—If on enquiry you find the allegation well founded I will thank you to cause him to be immediately dismissd.”⁹

The post rider’s job was not an easy one—setting out for Louisville on Friday, arriving on Monday, and leaving for Vincennes the next day. Considering what the ride over the old trace must have been like in the middle of the winter, it is not hard to understand his temptation to fortify himself with too many stiff drinks.

Spring brought heavy rains and swollen streams to check the rider’s course. In June, 1808, the *Western Sun* carried the story of the drowning of William Loury who carried the mail between Vincennes and Cahokia. His body was found in the Little Wabash; his mail bag, “not materially injured,” was discovered a short distance below his body.¹⁰ The riders on this route seemed to be ill-fated. Two years after this, a rider was murdered between Vincennes and Kaskaskia, his body “staked down in the bottom of a creek,” and his mail bag stolen. The Post Office Department offered a five-hundred-dollar reward for the murderer and asked that “every exertion be made that we may furnish an awful example to prevent future atrocity.”¹¹

The next month Elihu Stout lost patience: “From the negligence of the post rider we have received no mail from the Eastward this week—we say *negligence*; because he pretends, (and surely it is nothing more than pretence) that he could not cross the White river, altho’ report says that some one concerned in the ferry gave him a certificate that the attempt would be hazardous;—and yet the river has been constantly crossed and recrossed without danger; and several gentlemen left this place and proceeded to Louisville within a few hours of the return of the post-rider.”¹²

The Postmaster General, agreeing with Stout, decried the “shameful derelection of duty,” fined the rider for

⁹ Carter (ed.), *Territorial Papers*, VII, 535.

¹⁰ Vincennes *Western Sun*, June 1, 1808, p. 3. c. 1.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, July 28, 1810, p. 3. c. 3; Carter (ed.), *Territorial Papers*, VIII, 35.

¹² Vincennes *Western Sun*, December 31, 1808, p. 3, c. 3.

neglect, and ordered his immediate dismissal if such an incident occurred again.¹³

In January the editor cleverly combined his apology to his customers with a plea to delinquent subscribers¹⁴—"Another week and no mail, and the poor printer is quite at his wits end—he knows it is difficult to be pleased—and more so to please—some with foreign news, others domestic—a few poetry and others miscellany—and all expect to be gratified—no pains shall be spared to furnish a morsel for each—but in common with others, the printer has his wants—and with his subscribers expects to have his wants gratified, he wants money—he wants to be paid—he well recollects the old adage, and he thinks it cannot be applied to him 'he is a cross dog that bites before he barks' as he has been growling and barking at some of his subscribers for some time—to those who have paid him he returns his most gratified acknowledgments."

Not much improvement seems to have been made in the service despite complaints, threats, and orders from headquarters. "We are left again without a mail," said the *Western Sun* of March 25, 1809, "how long we shall remain so, the post rider can perhaps inform us as he rides, or does not ride, as suits his own convenience. There has not I believe been more than two mails in succession, since the middle of December last, without a failure, and not many more that half a dozen since that time."¹⁵

In May a new schedule was announced. By this the rider left Louisville every Sunday at 6 A. M. and arrived at Vincennes on the next Wednesday by 10 A. M. He left Vincennes the same day at 2 P. M. and arrived at Louisville by 6 P. M. on Saturday.¹⁶ This gave him a longer time to make his tour, but he seems to have had as much trouble keeping to this schedule as he had to the old one. Mr. Stout continued to lament the barrenness of his news due to the failure of the mail to arrive.

¹³ Carter (ed.), *Territorial Papers*, VII, 641-42.

¹⁴ Vincennes *Western Sun*, January 28, 1809, p. 3, c. 1.

¹⁵ See also *Ibid.*, January 21, 1809, p. 3, c. 1; February 4, 1809, p. 3, c. 1; March 18, 1809, p. 3, c. 1.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, May 13, 1809, p. 1, c. 3-4.

THE WAR OF 1812

WHILE evidences of the advance of "civilization" westward—organized government, newspapers, mail service—were increasing, Indiana had not solved her chief problem as a frontier region. Indian trouble, somewhat quieted after the Greenville Treaty, began again, and little flare-ups between whites and Indians were too frequent to let anyone believe that the matter was being settled by treaties and councils. The Indians' chief complaint was against encroachment on their lands and the murdering of their people by lawless whites. They retaliated by raiding American settlements. The rise of Tecumseh and his brother the Prophet with their efforts to join the tribes into confederacy gradually brought the whole situation to a head.

In 1807 the Larkins family, father, mother, and five children, were attacked on the trace by a roving band of savages. The father was killed and the rest of the family taken into captivity. This incident hastened efforts to insure more protection to travelers. A band of twenty or more rangers was organized under Captain William Hargrove to patrol the trails in southern Indiana. The men were divided into three divisions, the first to patrol the road between Vincennes and the Falls from the Wabash to French Lick, the second from there to the Ohio, and the third to range the area from the Ohio Falls to the Lawrenceburg neighborhood.¹

Blockhouses were erected at convenient points in the settled areas where families were ordered to repair when bands of Indians approached within a threatening distance. At the "Mud Holes"² on the old trace, near the present site of

¹ Cockrum, William M., *Pioneer History of Indiana* . . . (Oakland City, Ind., 1907), pp. 202 ff.; Wilson, George R., *Early Indiana Trails and Surveys* (Indiana Historical Society Publications, VI, No. 3, Indianapolis, 1910), pp. 75-76.

² The "Mud-holes" were excavations "horned" into the rich soil of Boone Township, Dubois County, by the buffalo, and used for wallowing purposes. They covered perhaps more than a thousand acres. An actual

Portersville in Dubois County, Fort McDonald was erected by John and William McDonald, who had settled there as early as 1801. Woolsey Pride, one of the first pioneers of Pike County, had erected a blockhouse on the trace at White Oak Springs (Petersburg) by 1807.³ Rangers camps were located on the trace—one was at the present site of Cuzco in Dubois County and another at the spot where the trace crossed Big Blue River. Additional patrols were assigned to the Yellow Banks Trace which ran north from Rockport on the Ohio to the Forks of White River and to the Red Banks Trace. "Military" roads were cut through the wilderness to connect these main routes.⁴

By November the Indian threats had subsided somewhat and most of the rangers were dismissed.⁵ But this was only a lull. The War of 1812 was coming to the West. Again the old trace saw messengers, soldiers, and Indian warriors pass by. Troops from Kentucky and the eastern Indiana counties, answering Harrison's call for a campaign against the Prophet, marched over it to their points of rendezvous at Vincennes and at Fort Harrison up the Wabash.⁶

Among the soldiers who came out to Vincennes during 1811 and 1812 was Lieutenant Josiah Bacon, a quartermaster of the Fourth Regiment of United States Infantry. Lieutenant trace could not be distinguished through them and no exact point at which the surveyors' lines crossed the old road in this area is given in the field notes of the surveyors.

³ See Wilson, George R., *History of Dubois County from Its Primitive Days to 1910* (Jasper, Ind., 1910), pp. 30, 38; *History of Pike and Dubois County*, p. 475; Jean, Margaret Story, and Treanor, Aline Jean, "The First Families of White Oak Springs," in *Indiana Magazine of History*, XXXI (1935), 296-97. There was also a blockhouse and military station at French Lick. See Harris, *Remarks Made During A Tour Through the United States*, p. 131.

⁴ Cockrum, *Pioneer History of Indiana*, pp. 204ff.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 228-29.

⁶ Vincennes *Western Sun*, August 18, 1812, p. 3, c. 1; August 25, p. 3, c. 1; September 22, p. 4, c. 1; September 29, p. 3, c. 1. See also "Some Letters of John Gibson," in *Indiana Magazine of History*, I (1905), 128-31. Harrison passed over the old trace in making his preparations for the coming battles. Cleaves, Freeman, *Old Tippecanoe. William Henry Harrison and His Times* (New York & London, 1939), p. 115.

Bacon was accompanied by his wife Lydia, who kept a journal of their expedition which took them from Boston out to Vincennes, then up to Detroit, and after various adventures back to Massachusetts.⁷

Mrs. Bacon cheerfully faced the hardships of the western trip and wrote to her mother that she "felt a little vexed with those wives . . . who would prefer, staying at home, rather than suffer a little inconvenience, what did they get married for," she demanded. "*Never, no never,*" she declared, "for a single instant have I been sorry that I came with mine. . . ."⁸

The troops which they accompanied marched overland from the Falls to Vincennes, while Lieutenant Bacon and his wife came by water. They arrived about the first of October, 1811. During the winter Mrs. Bacon stayed in Vincennes and endured the anxious days of waiting for news of her husband who took part in the Tippecanoe campaign. Lieutenant Bacon returned to Vincennes safely and they remained there until March when he was ordered to Detroit. The route was to be by Louisville and then north through Ohio. Mrs. Bacon's journal gives an account of their overland journey across southern Indiana to Louisville.⁹

On May 14, 1812, the party set out. The Bacons, with the other officers and their wives, were permitted to go on horseback, while the rest marched on foot. Mrs. Bacon's spirits did not droop. The second day out she wrote, "I like travelling on horse back & slept finely on the ground last night, for the first time in my life, with a bear skin for our bedstead & a Buffalo Robe for our Bed." On the 17th she wrote: "It rain'd hard all day, never slept better than last night—we are now ready to start. I wish you could see us, it is really laughable to witness the comical scenes that are acted—I have a large bag on the Pomell of my saddle containing some necessary articles, a Bible, Homers Illiad, & a huge Spunge cake presented by one of our kind Friends the morning of our departure." "19th bright Sun, all going on in good health

⁷ In *Indiana Magazine of History*, XL, 367-86, XLI, 59-79.

⁸ *Ibid.*, XL, 385.

⁹ *Ibid.*, XL, 386, XLI, 60-62.

& spirits, but my feelings are somewhat tried seeing the poor Soldiers wives trudging on foot, some of the way mud up to their knees, & a little Child in their arms, only 4 or 5 Waggon allowed to carry the baggage, the poor women of course have to suffer, I should think it would kill them, saw two Houses one of them deserted, afraid of the Indians."

She had no fault to find with the camping equipment and food. "I suppose you will be anxious to know what we have to eat," she wrote, "how we carry conveniences to eat out of, & how we cook—we live very well as to the quality of our victuals & have enough, plenty of elegant *Bacon* (*nothing better*) in this part of the world." She described how chickens were roasted over a fire and declared that meat cooked in this way was "very good indeed." "We have a pack horse who carried a pair of mess Boxes made with separate apartments to hold cups plates & ccc& our tea & sugar in canisters, & our table is the hind board of a waggon set on a portable cricket made like a cot bedstead, our candlestick is a bayonet reversed with the point in the ground, the part which goes on to the gun serves admirably for a socket to put the candle in."

The trip was not without its tragedy. One of the soldiers was suddenly taken ill of cholera and died. "He is buried in the woods," wrote Mrs. Bacon, "in a bark Coffin, the only one, the times would admit of."

The victory over the Indians at Tippecanoe in 1811 was a blow to the Prophet's prestige and subdued the Wabash tribes, but sporadic acts of hostility against the white settlements persisted. The formal declaration of war between Great Britain and the United States in June and its effect on the Indians was foreseen by Harrison. In the general orders issued on April 16, 1812,¹⁰ he laid plans for a system of frontier fortifications. One hundred and fifty men were assigned to range the country between Vincennes and Louisville "so as to completely protect the citizens and the road."¹¹

¹⁰ Esarey (ed.), *Messages and Letters*, II, 163.

¹¹ On April 20, 1812, Captain Zachary Taylor paid three dollars to Sally McGowan for transporting two baggage wagons and troops across the east fork of White River. The party was going from Louisville to Vincennes.

September, October, and November were bloody, terrifying months on the Indiana frontier. But the Indian attacks on Fort Wayne and Fort Harrison and the Pigeon Roost massacre were followed up by the relentless destruction of Indian villages in Indiana, Illinois, and Ohio. In the end the War of 1812 was disastrous to the redmen. All their hopes of help from the British were gone and the Americans still angry and distrustful, adopted the policy of driving the Indians out rather than endeavoring to live in peace with them.

See receipt in the Mitten Collection, Indiana Historical Society Library. Sarah McGowan was the wife of William or Thomas McGowan who maintained a ferry over the East Fork of White River near the site of Mt. Pleasant in Martin County. Her husband was murdered there by the Indians a little over a month after Taylor's expedition was there. The route Taylor followed was at this point north of the trace as delineated from the surveyor's notes.

THE DECLINE OF THE TRACE

NOW for the first time southern Indiana was free from fear of Indian raids; now she could turn her full attention to building homes, founding towns, and establishing herself as a state. How quickly the Americans had expelled the redmen was remarked by Thomas Hulme, who traveled north from Princeton in Gibson County to the Mud Holes on the trace in 1817. "This Mud-holes," he wrote,¹ "was a sort of fort, not 4 years ago, for guarding against the Indians, who then committed great depredations, killing whole families often, men, women and children. How changeable are the affairs of this world. I have not met with a single Indian in the whole course of my route."

By the time of Hulme's visit new routes from the Falls to Vincennes had developed. The route outlined in Darby's *Emigrant's Guide*, in 1818, mentioned at the beginning, followed the general course of the trace as outlined in the surveyors' notes, but alternate routes had developed.

In the fall of 1811 an unidentified traveler from Pennsylvania crossed southern Indiana on his way to Illinois. He went through Corydon and crossed both forks of White River. Here is his account: ". . . after tarrying several days in Louisville I crossed the Ohio and having crossed the knobs followed the course of a small stream called Indian Creek to Corendon [Corydon] the seat of Justices for Harrison Cty Indiana Territory. This place is but new and contains only 4 or 5 houses which are very indifferent. 7 miles from this place on Blue R. I was weell intertained at a Mr. Heths where I staid 10 or twelve Days then pursued my rout. 6 Miles from corridon I crossed a very beautifull Stream about as large as little Beaver on which the governor has mills. Blue R. is about 5 miles from this. [It] is a stream as large as Neshanie

¹ Journal of Thomas Hulme in Cobbett, William, *A Year's Residence in the United States of America* . . . In Three Parts (3d. ed. London, 1822), p. 281.

which runs into the Ohio about 30 miles below its falls. The country on from this to the East fork of White River is very hilly but well timbered.

"Petoka [is] a small creek 25 miles from corriden. This stream runs North-west and empties into the Wabash about 25 miles below Vincennes. Licking Cr 35 miles from Petoka Cr same as Mad. R. From thence to East fork of White. R. . . . West fork of White. R. heads near Greenville is as large as the East Fork and is a most beautifull stream & on it there is very beautifull land. The confluence of these two Rivers is about 40 miles from the Wabash. The East fork heads near Whitewater Cr in part & part near the ohio R.

"You cross the West fork on a solid rock. You now begin to travel through vast fiealds of natural meadow which the further you ride the further they extend. From the last mentioned stream to Vincennes is 15 miles."²

As settlements sprang up and new towns were laid out, the old road changed its course and new roads were built. One example of such a change was at New Albany, platted in 1813. The original trace from Clarksville passed north of the site of New Albany, but when settlers began moving into this site, a new road was built to accommodate them, and soon the old trail between Clarksville and the "Gut ford" was almost abandoned, travelers going by way of Robinson's tavern, in what is now the northern part of New Albany, then north out of town to join the old trace not far from the Knobs.³

In 1809 Indiana Territory was divided and the Territory of Illinois was established. There was immediate clamor for removal of the capital of Indiana Territory from Vincennes to a more central part of the settled area, and in 1813 Corydon, in Harrison County, south of the old trace, was chosen as the seat of government. Thereafter travel tended to pass through this town.

By 1816, the year Indiana became a state, there was a northern and southern route between the Falls and Vincennes,

²"To Illinois in 1811," in *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*, XXXVI (1943), 208-9.

³*History of Ohio Falls Cities and Their Counties* (2 volumes. Cleveland: L. A. Williams & Co., 1882), II, 150, 152.

the southern passing through Corydon. Both of the routes availed themselves of parts of the old road. The following letter to the editor of the Vincennes *Western Sun* describes them:⁴

"Mr. Stout,

"*Information to the public and not individual trouble* has induced me to offer a few remarks, which I have recently made from actual experiment, upon the DIFFERENT ROADS from Vincennes to Louisville. And as all TRAVELLERS feel an INTEREST in the subject, you'll oblige ONE by giving his remarks publicity.

"No. 1. Road by the Mud-holes.

"From Vincennes to Aaron Decker's⁵ ferry on White River 15 m.

"Road not *very* good

"From White River to Squire Smith's⁶ 5

"Road generally bad. A tolerable house, but city prices!

"From Smith's to Miley's 2

"Good Dutch⁷ fare.

"From Miley's to the Mud-holes at McDonald's 20

"About half the road bad. Some years ago this was a very good house, but now very much depreciated.

"From McDonald's to the fork of the road.

"A very hilly, ugly and bad road. It here branches—the left hand and much the plainest fork leading to the French Lick, which is 6 miles. The right hand fork going over a very rough country, with little accommodations, to Corydon, a distance of 36

⁴ Vincennes *Western Sun*, August 24, 1816, p. 2, c. 1-2.

⁵ Decker was operating the old ferry on White River above Petersburg, formerly run by Joshua Harbin. See *ante*, p. 212, and Jean, Margaret Story, and Treanor, Aline Jean, "White Oak Springs, 1810-1817," in *Indiana Magazine of History*, XXXVI (1940), 236n.

⁶ Probably Hosea Smith, who came to Pike County in 1812 and settled there. He kept the post office at White Oak Springs, later Petersburg, on the old trace. *History of Pike and Dubois Counties*, p. 251.

⁷ The Miley family were Pennsylvania Dutch. Henry Miley entered land near White Oak Springs in Pike County in 1813. Jean and Treanor, "White Oak Springs, 1810-1817," in *Indiana Magazine of History*, XXXVI, 231n, 236.

"From Corydon to Louisville by Oatman's ferry 26⁸

"The road is pretty good—intersecting the other one (here called the N. Albany road) to the N. W. of French's on the Knobs, in sight of a cabin, the road branches, the left going to N. Albany and the right to Oatman's ferry. Opposite to which on the Ky. side, is the farm and present dwelling of captain Fontaine, who, I believe, it is truly said, keeps the neatest and best boats &c on the Ohio. The distance from here up to Louisville is 4 miles, over a handsome road well causey'd, which I am inform'd the captain opened, and for which he has my thanks.

"No. 2. Road by Capt Sholts's.⁹

"From Vincennes to Wm. Snyder's 9 m.

"From Snyder's to Wm. Hawkin's¹⁰ ferry 8

"From the ferry to Liverpool¹¹ 4

"The road from Vincennes here is *very* good, except a few miles in the river bottom. Mr. Hilton keeps pretty good accommodations here.

"From Liverpool to the forks of the road 10

"Good road. The left hand passes by Perry's ferry on the E. branch of White river, where the ford is not right convenient; and travellers, as I'm inform'd, refused the most ordinary accommodations. The right hand goes to captain Sholts's, distance 8 miles. Here there's a good ford in low

⁸ Joseph Oatman was granted a license to keep a ferry across the Ohio four miles below Clarksville on July 10, 1807. *Indiana Territory Executive Journal*, p. 141. See also *History of Ohio Falls Cities and Their Counties*, II, 167, 168, 244-45.

⁹ This second route was the one followed by Henry Vest Bingham on his way to his home in Missouri in 1818. He went from New Albany, stopping at Widow Mores and Judge Chambers, going through Paoli and French Lick, and crossing the East Fork of White River at Captain Sholts's. He was three nights on the way. Windell, Marie George (ed.), "The Road West in 1818, The Diary of Henry Vest Bingham," in *Missouri Historical Review*, XL (1945), 46-51.

¹⁰ William Hawkins was granted a license to keep a ferry across the west fork of White River, June 6, 1807. *Indiana Territory Executive Journal*, p. 140.

¹¹ Now Washington, Daviess County.

water—a ferry in high water—and a genteel accommodating family.¹²

“From Sholts’s to Lick Creek 6

“From Lick creek to French Lick 10

“The road for the above 16 miles is not good—far better than the one by the Mud-holes. Here lives a very friendly accommodating man by the name of Williamson, with an industrious family.

“From French Lick to Chambers’s¹³ 14

“The road rather hilly, but taken by and large, or as it’s said the constitution of Indiana should be ‘as a perfect whole,’ is pretty good. Chambers and family are very obliging, and provide well for the traveller.

“From Chamber’s to the Wd. Moores 9

“The above description will here apply; and it’s unnecessary to say any thing about the house, its good character being already so well established.

“From the Wd. Moores to Blue river¹⁴ 6[?]

“Good road. New Town—wants houses.

“From Blue river to capt. Morris’s 15

“Road good. An obliging family and wholesome fare. Another New Town—wants houses.

“The road within half a mile of this stand branches. The left hand being the United States road going by old Daviss’s, from whence it’s 17 miles to Louisville by New Albany or

¹² Frederick Sholts. The following year, 1817, the county commissioners ordered Sholts to keep this ferry over the East Fork of White River and stipulated the following rates for services: loaded wagon and team, \$1.00; stage or two horse wagon, 62½ cents; man and horse, 12½ cents; “footmen” 6¼ cents per head. See Fulkerson, A. O., *History of Daviess County Indiana* (Indianapolis, B. F. Bowen & Co., 1915), p. 96; *History of Knox and Daviess Counties Indiana* (Chicago, The Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1886), p. 609.

¹³ Samuel Chambers purchased land in Orange County in 1815 and 1821 and operated a store, saddle and harness shop, and tavern. In 1840 he laid out the town of Chambersburg. *History of Lawrence, Orange, and Washington Counties Indiana* (Chicago: Goodspeed Bros. & Co., 1884), pp. 506-7. Hulme stopped at Chambers’ tavern and described it as good. See his *Journal* in Cobbett, *A Year’s Residence*, p. 281.

¹⁴ “Widow More’s ” is mentioned as a house of entertainment in 1819, by Adlard Welby in “A Visit to North America and the English Settlement in Illinois,” in Thwaites (ed.), *Early Western Travels*, XII, 233.

Jeffersonville, a particular description whereof is deemed useless, it having been so much travelled. The right hand leads to Oatman's ferry, a distance of 12 or 13 miles, and avoids the steep ascent of the Knobs and the descent has been lately rendered by labour, much easier and more convenient than on the U. S. road.

"From this ferry and captain Fontanie's on the Ky. side, there is an excellent road to Louisville, distance 4 miles.

"The country over which the above two roads pass—the difference in distance (being from 5 to 10 m.)—and the accommodations being considered, I have no hesitation in recommending to my fellow travellers going from here to Louisville or beyond that place, or those coming from there here, to travel road No. 2, that is by Sholts's, in preference to No. 1 by McDonalds.

"A TRAVELLER.

"*Vincennes, August, 23, 1816.*"

"Good" roads or "bad" roads of 1816 would all seem bad today. The buffalo paths, at least, had beds so hard packed that vegetation would never grow very dense or high on them. The new roads opened by early settlers were scarcely more than narrow avenues cut through the woods by felling trees and rolling the logs off to one side to rot. These withered trees or others blown down by storms were sometimes left lying across the way and had to be gotten over at great inconvenience.

The length of time necessary for the trip from the Falls to Vincennes does not seem to have been cut noticeably by the change in the course of the road. In 1816 a party from Castleton, Vermont, came out to Illinois on horseback. The journey from Louisville to Vincennes consumed four days. While the observations recorded by Asahel North, one of the party, do not indicate great acumen, they are entertaining.¹⁵ The travelers were impressed by the "badness" of the roads—a fact which is mentioned constantly throughout the account. All was not lost, however, for they visited Shakertown where they ate watermelons, and then crossed the Wabash into Illinois where they "ate peaches and drank whiskey." They returned

¹⁵ "Asahel North—Biographical Sketch and Diary," in *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*, XV (1922-23), 682-83.

to Vincennes and then to the Falls, again spending four days on the way.

In 1819 another traveler spent four days on the road. Richard Lee Mason came out to Illinois to inspect the tract of land near Alton which he had received for his service in the War of 1812. He was severely critical of the stouthearted Indiana pioneers who were turning the wilderness into farms and towns, declaring them "impudent and lazy beyond example," but apparently liked the West well enough to bring his family to St. Louis where he practiced medicine until his death in 1824.

On his 1819 journey Mason crossed the Ohio from Kentucky and passed through New Albany and stayed at Miller's tavern six miles beyond. He followed the northern route to Vincennes, going by Judge Chambers' through Paoli, across the East Fork of White River to Hindostan in Martin County, and then across the West Fork to Vincennes.¹⁶

With the coming of these new roads, the old trace gradually sank into obscurity. In 1820 the General Assembly of Indiana ordered a road to be located from New Albany, thence to Fredericksburg, thence to Paoli in Orange County, thence to Hindostan, on the East Fork of White River, and on to Vincennes. The route lay completely north of the old trace. Parts of it continued to be used and parts of it are still used today, but by 1820 it had ceased to be the main thoroughfare across southern Indiana. Its hard-packed bed has never produced a heavy vegetation and even where it has been completely abandoned as a road, its route—the route of Indiana's first highway—is in many places still apparent.

¹⁶ *Narrative of Richard Lee Mason in the Pioneer West 1819* (Heartman's Historical Series No. 6. New York, n. d.), pp. 33-39.

APPENDIX

RECORD OF THE COURSE OF THE TRACE FROM SURVEYORS' FIELD NOTES

THE following record of the course of the Buffalo Trace is taken from the field notes of the rectangular surveys, 1805-1807, in the State Auditor's Office, State House, Indianapolis.

According to this record the trace crossed the following section lines :

FLOYD COUNTY

between sections 27 and 28, T 2 S, R 6 E, at a point 45.50 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections, called Vincennes Trace;

between sections 21 and 20, T 2 S, R 6 E, at a point 16.93 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections, called Vincennes Trace;

between sections 20 and 19, T 2 S, R 6 E, at a point 32.17 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections, called Vincennes Trace;

between sections 23 and 14, T 2 S, R 5 E, at a point 8.00 chains west of the east corner common to these sections, called Vincennes Trace;

between sections 15 and 10, T 2 S, R 5 E, at a point 57.00 chains east of the west corner common to these two sections, called Vincennes Trace;

between sections 10 and 9, T 2 S, R 5 E, at a point 32.00 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections, called Vincennes Trace;

between sections 9 and 8, T 2 S, R 5 E, at a point 72.00 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections, called Vincennes Trace;

between sections 5 and 6, T 2 S, R 5 E, at a point 6.00 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections, called Vincennes Trace; also recorded as crossing the line between sections 6 and 7, T 2 S, R 5 E, at a point 14.50 chains west of the east corner common to these sections;

between ranges 5 and 4 E, T 2 S, 20.00 chains north of the southeast corner of section 1, T 2 S, R 4 E (one mile west of this point the trace enters Harrison County);

HARRISON COUNTY

between sections 2 and 11, T 2 S, R 4 E, at a point 51.50 chains east of the west corner common to these two sections, called Vincennes Trace;

between sections 11 and 10, T 2 S, R 4 E, at a point 59.39 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections, called Vincennes Trace;

between sections 10 and 9, T 2 S, R 4 E, at a point 66.40 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections;¹

between sections 9 and 4, T 2 S, R 4 E, at a point 24.21 chains, also at 12.50 chains, and also at 3.60 chains east of the south corner common to these two sections;

between sections 4 and 5, T 2 S, R 4 E, at a point 1.40 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections;

between sections 5 and 6, T 2 S, R 4 E, at a point 30.53 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections;

between ranges 4 and 3, T 2 S, at a point 41.50 chains north of the southeast corner of section 1, T 2 S, R 3 E;

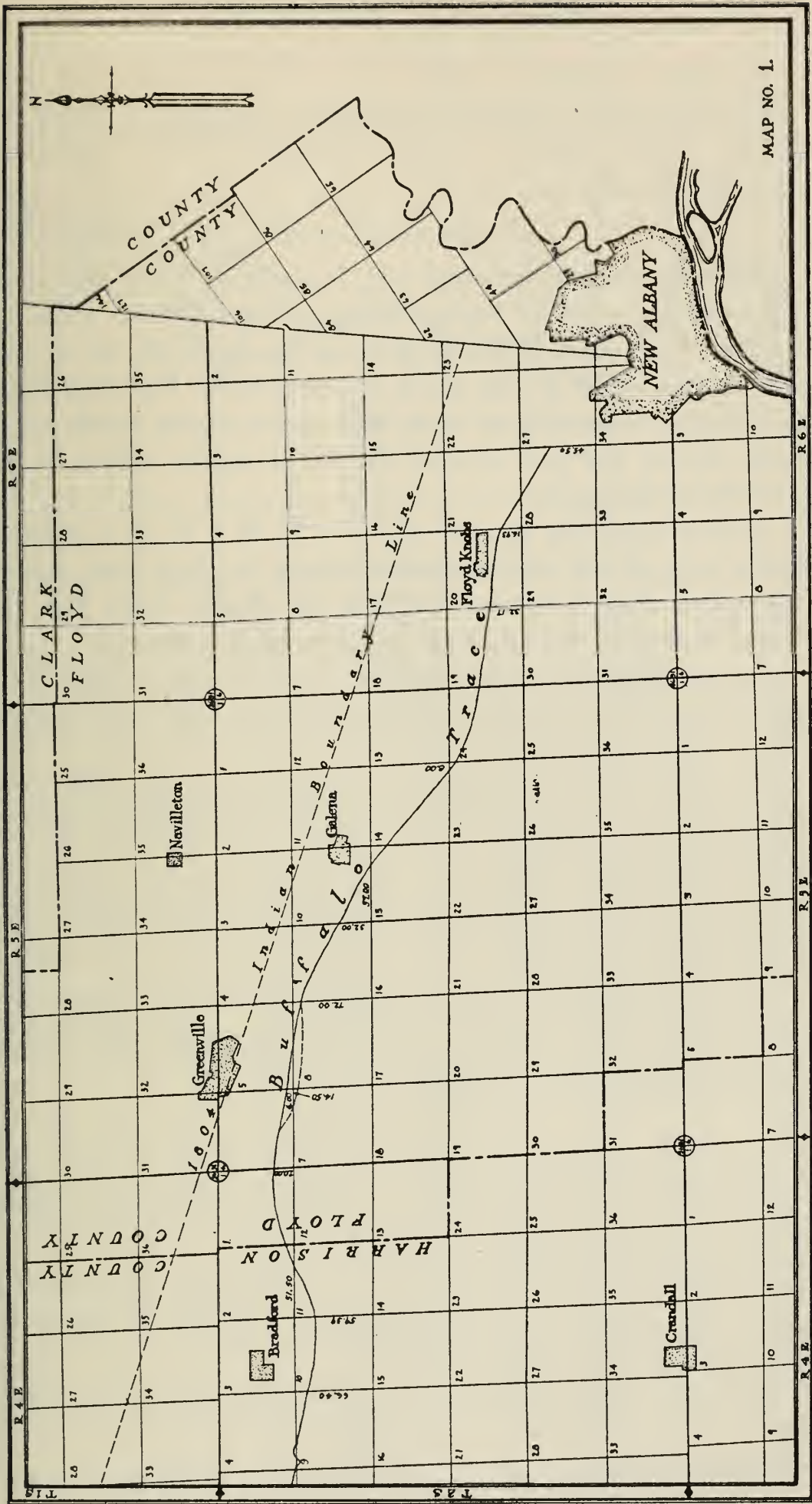
between sections 1 and 2, T 2 S, R 3 E, at a point 50.00 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections, called Vincennes Trace (this is on the line between Morgan and Blue River townships);

between sections 2 and 3, T 2 S, R 3 E, at a point 66.30 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections, called Vincennes Trace;

between sections 34 and 33, T 1 S, R 3 E, at a point 17.20 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections (this is at the present site of Hancock);

between sections 33 and 32, T 1 S, R 3 E, at a point 24.30 chains north of the south corner common to these sections;

¹ According to the plat book map, at this point the trace crossed from section 10 to 3, from 3 to 4, from 4 to 9, from 9 to 4, back to 9, and from 9 to 8. There is a break, and then the trace is shown crossing from section 5 to 6. "Records. Surveys. U. S. Land," V, 122, State Auditor's Office.



MAP NO. 1.

between sections 32 and 31, T 1 S, R 3 E, at a point 4.06 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections (from here it crosses Big Blue River and enters Crawford County) ;

CRAWFORD COUNTY

between sections 36 and 35, T 1 S, R 2 E, at a point 58.50 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections (this line between sections 35 and 36, at a point 25.00 chains north of the south corner crosses Big Blue River, 1.50 chains wide, course west, and at 70 chains north of the south corner the line crosses the river again, where it was 3.00 chains across) ;

between sections 35 and 26, T 1 S, R 2 E, at a point 41 chains east of the west corner common to these two sections (Big Blue River crossed the line 50 chains from the west corner, course S 70° E, and was 3.00 chains across) ;

between sections 26 and 27, T 1 S, R 2 E, at a point 31.00 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections, called Vincennes Trace ;

between sections 27 and 28, T 1 S, R 2 E, at a point 74.00 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections, called Vincennes Trace ;

between section 28 and 21, T 1 S, R 2 E, at a point 62.00 chains east of the west corner common to these two sections, called Vincennes Trace ;

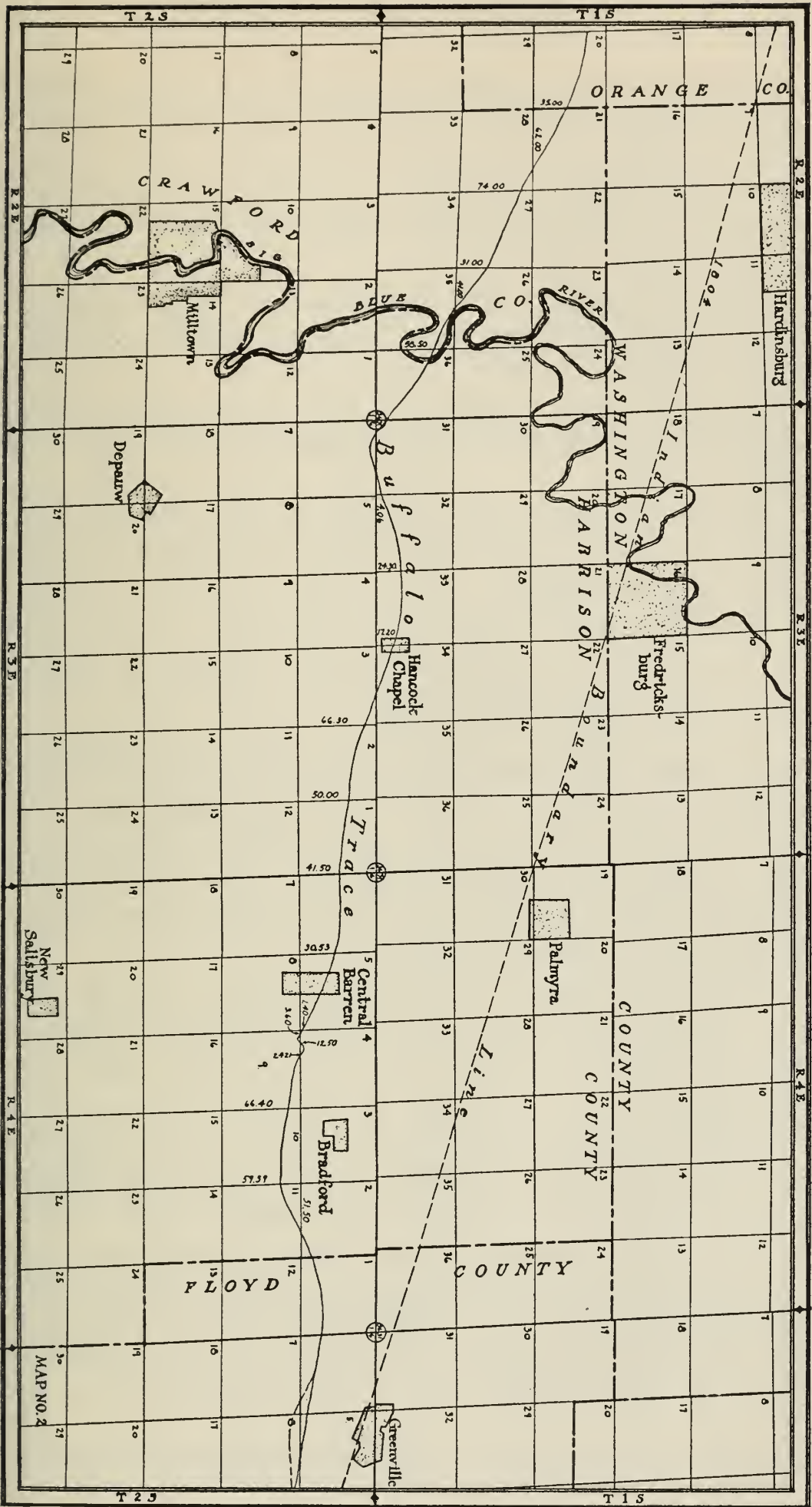
between sections 21 and 20, T 1 S, R 2 E, at a point 35.00 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections (here the trace enters Orange County) ;

ORANGE COUNTY

between sections 20 and 19, T 1 S, R 2 E, at a point 55.00 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections, called Vincennes Trace ;

between sections 19 and 18, T 1 S, R 2 E, at a point 58.00 chains west of the east corner common to these two sections, called Vincennes Trace ;

between ranges 1 and 2 E, T 1 S, at a point 15.00 chains north of the south line of section 13, T 1 S, R 1 E, called Vincennes Trace ;



MAP NO. 2

between sections 13 and 14, T 1 S, R 1 E, at a point 72 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections, called a "road";

between sections 14 and 11, T 1 S, R 1 E, at a point 74.00 chains east of the west corner common to these two sections, called a "road";

between sections 11 and 10, T 1 S, R 1 E, at a point 14.00 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections, called a "road";

between sections 10 and 9, T 1 S, R 1 E, at a point 65.00 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections, called a "road";

between sections 9 and 4, T 1 S, R 1 E, at a point 53.00 chains east of the west corner common to these two sections, called Vincennes Trace;

between sections 4 and 5, T 1 S, R 1 E, at a point 44.50 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections, called Vincennes Trace;

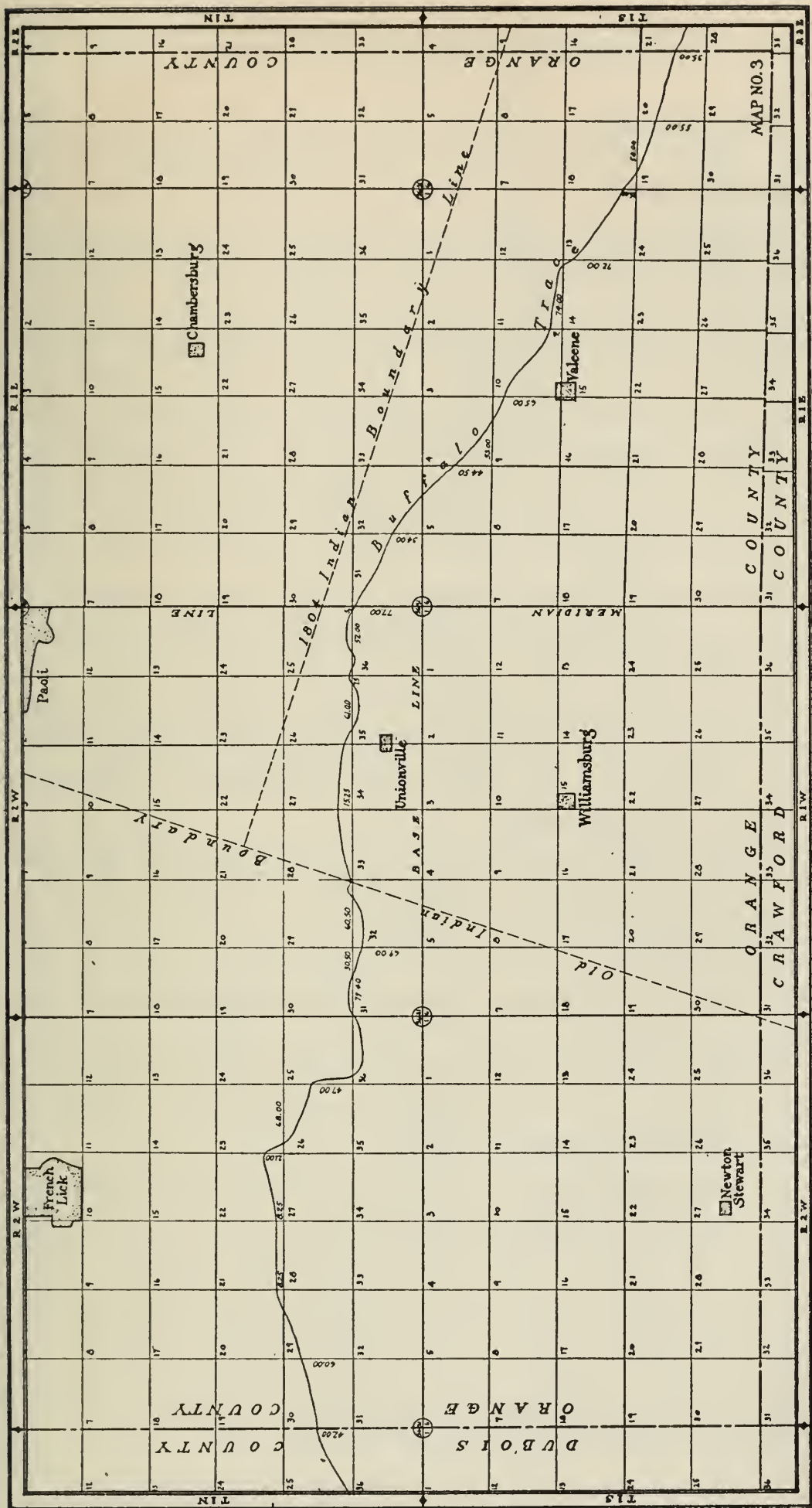
between sections 31 and 32, T 1 N, R 1 E, at a point 34.00 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections;

between section 31, T 1 N, R 1 E, and section 36, T 1 N, R 1 W, at a point 77.00 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections (this line is the second principal meridian and the south corner is the initial point, where the meridian line intersects the base);

between sections 25 and 36, T 1 N, R 1 W, at a point 5.00 chains west of the east corner common to these two sections (course northwest), also at 52 chains west (course southwest);²

between sections 26 and 35, T 1 N, R 1 W, at 7.50 chains west of the east corner common to these two sections (course southwest); also at 61 chains west (course nearly west);

² The course of the trace shown on the map in the plat book differs from that given in the field notes at this point. According to the map the trace crossed from section 25 to 36, and back again to 25, then to 26, back to 35, back to 26, then back to 35, then to 34, and from 34 to 27. "Records. Surveys. U. S. Lands," V, 136.



between sections 27 and 28, T 1 N, R 1 W, at a point 15.25 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections;

between sections 28 and 29, T 1 N, R 1 W, at a point 1.00 chain north of the south corner common to these two sections;

between sections 29 and 32, T 1 N, R 1 W, at a point 60.50 chains east of the west corner common to these two sections;

between sections 32 and 31, T 1 N, R 1 W, at a point 69.00 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections;

between sections 31 and 30, T 1 N, R 1 W, at a point 30.50 chains west of the east corner common to these two sections, also at a point 79.40 chains west of the east corner, called Vincennes Trace;³

between sections 25 and 26, T 1 N, R 2 W, at a point 47.00 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections, called Vincennes Trace;

between sections 26 and 23, T 1 N, R 2 W, at a point 68.00 chains west of the east corner common to these two sections, called Vincennes Trace (this is the line between Jackson and French Lick townships);

between sections 22 and 23, T 1 N, R 2 W, at a point 21.00 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections, called Vincennes Trace;

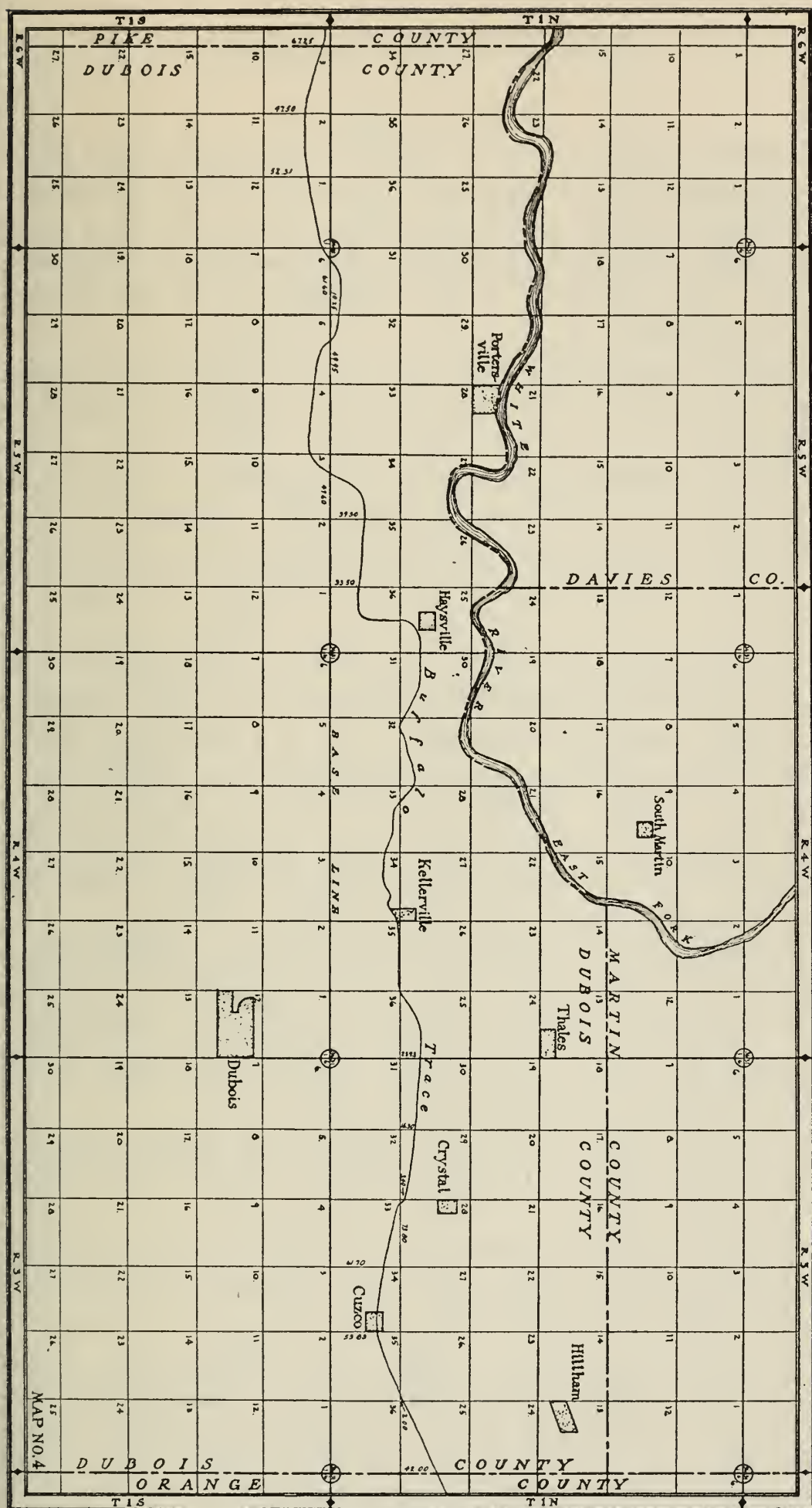
between 22 and 21, T 1 N, R 2 W, at a point 8.25 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections, called Vincennes Trace;⁴

between sections 29 and 30, T 1 N, R 2 W, at a point 60.00 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections, called Vincennes Trace;

between ranges 2 and 3 west, at a point 42.00 chains north of the southeast corner of section 25, T 1 N, R 3 W, called Road to Vincennes (here the trace enters Dubois County);

³ The map in the plat book shows the trace crossing back from section 30 to 31, from 31 to 36, and from 36 to 26. "Records. Surveys. U. S. Lands," V, 136.

⁴ According to the plat book map, at this point the trace crossed from section 21 to 20, and from 20 to 29. *Ibid.*, V, 138.



DUBOIS COUNTY

between sections 25 and 26, T 1 N, R 3 W, at a point 2 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections ;

between sections 35 and 34, T 1 N, R 3 W, at a point 53.83 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections (this corner is on the base line and at the present site of Cuzco) ;

between sections 34 and 33, T 1 N, R 3 W, at a point 61.70 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections ;

between sections 33 and 28, T 1 N, R 3 W, at a point 73.80 chains west of the east corner of these two sections ;

between sections 28 and 29, T 1 N, R 3 W, at a point 3.40 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections ;

between sections 29 and 30, T 1 N, R 3 W, at a point 15.30 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections ;⁵

between ranges 4 and 5 west, T 1 N, at a point 23.93 chains north of the southeast corner of section 25, T 1 N, R 4 W ;

between sections 36 and 35, T 1 N, R 5 W, at a point 33.50 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections, called Louisville Trace (this crossing is about one and a half miles southwest of Haysville) ;

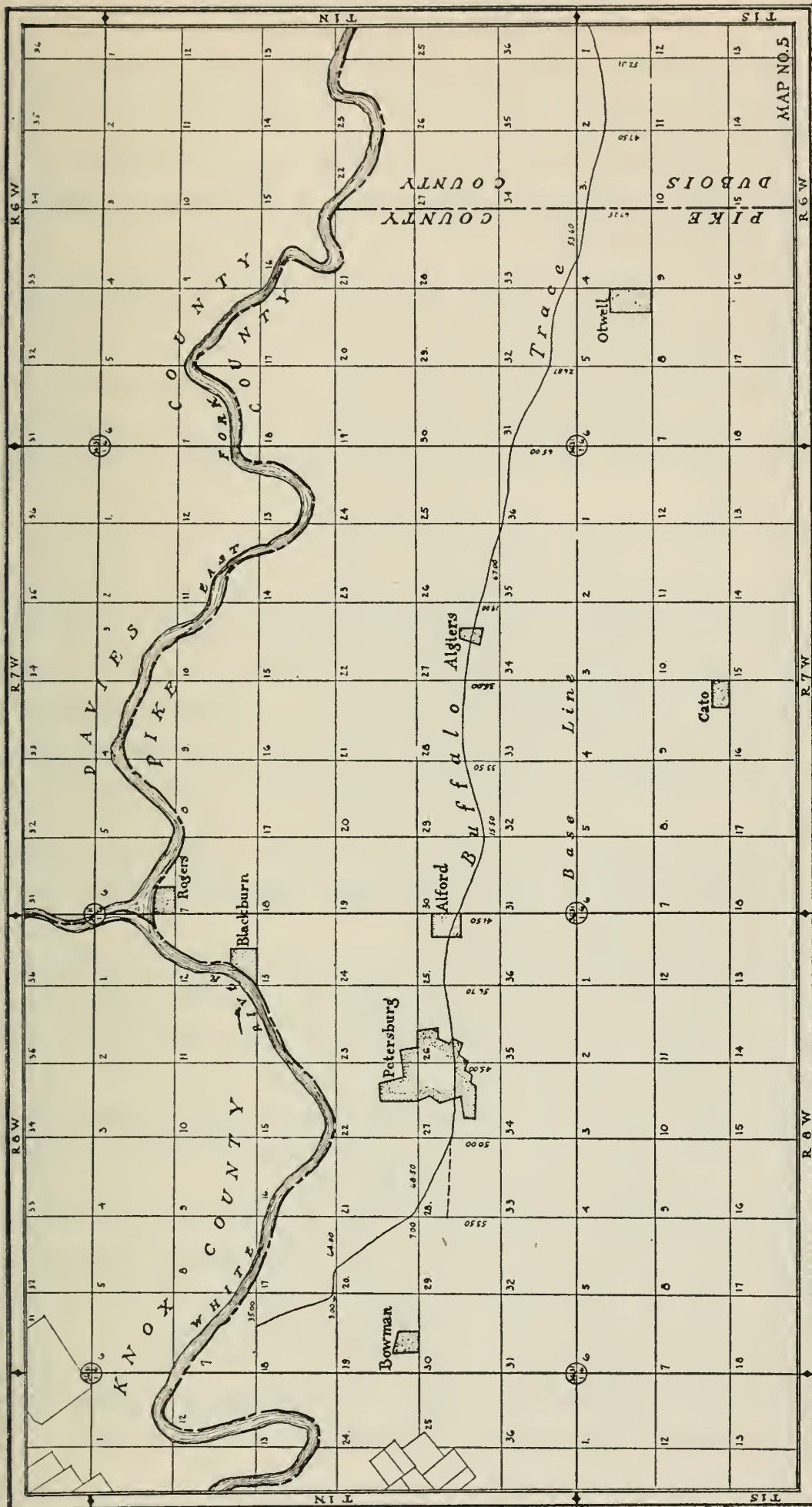
between sections 35 and 34, T 1 N, R 5 W, at a point 39.30 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections (this is the line between Harbison and Boone townships) ;

across the base line at a point 49.60 chains west of the southeast corner of section 34, T 1 N, R 5 W ;

across the base line, at a point 49.95 chains west of the southeast corner of section 32, T 1 N, R 5 W, called the Kentucky Road ;

between sections 31 and 32, T 1 N, R 5 W, at a point 10.25 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections, called Louisville Trace ;

⁵ No mention of the trace is given in the surveyors' notes through Range 4. From evidence left on the earth's surface the course of the trace followed that of present State Road 56 from the last mentioned crossing as far as Hope, then swung southward. The plat book map shows a road crossing the line between section 30, T 1 N, R 3 W, and section 25, T 1 N, R 4 W. "Records. Surveys. U. S. Lands," V, 143.



across the base line, at a point 61.60 chains west of the southeast corner of section 31, T 1 N, R 5 W, called "Bend of Kentucky road";

between sections 1 and 2, T 1 S, R 6 W, at a point 52.31 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections, called Vincennes Trace;

between sections 2 and 3, T 1 S, R 6 W, at a point 47.50 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections, called Vincennes Trace;

between sections 3 and 4, T 1 S, R 6 W, at a point 67.25 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections, called Vincennes Trace (the trace enters Pike County at this point);

PIKE COUNTY

across the Base, at a point 53.60 chains west of the southeast corner of section 33, T 1 N, R 6 W, called Indian Trail;

between sections 32 and 31, T 1 N, R 6 W, at a point 26.87 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections;

between ranges 6 and 7, at a point 65.50 chains north of the Base Line, called "Trail Leading from Vincennes to falls of Ohio";

between sections 35 and 26, T 1 N, R 7 W, at a point 67.00 chains east of the west corner common to these two sections, called Indian Trail;

between sections 26 and 27, T 1 N, R 7 W, at a point 19.00 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections, called "Road from Vincennes to the Falls" (this is at the town of Algiers);

between 27 and 28, T 1 N, R 7 W, at a point 35.00 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections, called "Trail fr. Vincennes to Falls of Ohio";

between sections 28 and 29, T 1 N, R 7 W, at a point 33.50 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections, called "Trail fr Vincennes to Falls of Ohio" (this is on the line between Jefferson and Washington townships);

between sections 29 and 30, T 1 N, R 7 W, at a point 15.50 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections, called "Road from Vincennes to Falls of Ohio";

between ranges 7 and 8, T 1 N, at a point 41.50 chains north of the southeast corner of section 25, T 1 N, R 8 W, called Vincennes Trace (this is at the town of Alford);

between sections 25 and 26, T 1 N, R 5 W, at a point 56.70 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections, called Vincennes Trace;

between sections 26 and 27, T 1 N, R 8 W, at a point 45.00 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections, called Vincennes Trace (this is at the town of Petersburg);

between sections 27 and 28, T 1 N, R 8 W, at a point 50.00 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections, called Vincennes Trace;

between sections 21 and 28, T 1 N, R 8 W, at a point 68.50 chains west of the east corner common to these two sections. Called "a road leading from the Falls to Vincennes" (another trail led west out of Petersburg and crossed the line between sections 28 and 29, T 1 N, R 8 W, at a point 53.50 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections);

between sections 21 and 20, T 1 N, R 8 W, at a point 7.00 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections, called "Trace from Louisville to Vincennes";

between 20 and 17, T 1 N, R 8 W, at a point 64.00 chains west of the east corner common to these two sections, called Vincennes Trace;

between sections 17 and 18, T 1 N, R 8 W, at a point 3.00 chains north of the south corner common to these two sections, called Vincennes Trace;

between sections 18 and 7, T 1 N, R 8 W, at a point 35.00 chains west of the east corner common to these two sections, called Vincennes Trace.

[Here the trace entered "Barton's claim" or "reserve," a private claim. From this point no record of the trace is given in the surveyors' notes.]

RECORD OF WILLIAM RECTOR'S SURVEY OF THE TRACE¹

SURVEY of the Old Vincennes Trace Leading from the Ohio River in Clark's Grant, To Vincennes, on the Wabash. July 11, 1805.

Went to a poplar & two beeches on the bank of the Ohio river S. W. Corner to Clarks grant, & traced a line thereof N. 40° W. 320 poles to two Elms & a Beech on the bank of falling Run, then measured another line thereof N 2° E. 184 poles, where struck the Vincennes trace, in Parker's old improvements, thence with the meanders of said trace from line of Clarks Grant.

N 79 W	5.00	
N 53 W	4.50	
N 69 W	5.00	
N 49 W	25.00	
N 60 W	10.00	At 9.50 a creek 12 lks wide. S.
West	17.00	At 16.00 a branch 8 " " S. E.
N 60 W	8.50	
N 87 W	5.00	A Beech 20 in dia. marked "To C. G. 1 M."
N 82 W	9.00	
S 85 W	21.00	
N 87 W	5.00	
N 65 W	5.00	
N 86 W	6.00	
N 66 W	18.00	
S 80 W	6.00	A Branch 6 lks wide S. E.
N 73 W	10.00	A Beech 9 in dia. marked "To C. G. 2 M."
N 57 W	6.00	
N 20 W	11.50	
N 42 W	10.00	
North	7.00	
N 48 W	7.00	

¹From "Clark Land Grant Miscellaneous Record No. 1. Land Depart. State of Indiana," pp. 37-46. State Auditor's Office, State House, Indianapolis.

N 73 W	8.00	
N 87 W	22.00	
N 66 W	8.50	A B. Oak 20 in dia. marked "To C. G. 3 M."
N 86 W	6.00	
N 47 W	9.00	
S 79 W	8.00	
N 70 W	5.00	
N 53 W	3.50	At 3.00 E. fork of Buck creek, 15 lks wide. S. E.
N 81 W	48.50	A Beech 6 in dia marked "To C. G. 4 M."
N 70 W	12.00	
S 80 W	28.50	
S 68 W	36.50	
S 80 W	3.00	A B. Oak 22 in dia. marked "C. G. 5 M."
S 80 W	13.00	
N 80 W	17.00	
N 67 W	7.50	July 12 th , 1805.
N 56 W	42.50	A Beech 18 in dia. marked "To C. G. 6 M."
N 88 W	11.00	
N 67 W	12.50	
N 42 W	19.00	
N 28 W	15.50	At 10.50 middle fork of Buck Cr.
N 46 W	5.00	
N 70 W	5.00	
N 44 W	12.00	A Beech 12 in dia marked "To C. G. 7 M."
N 44 W	70.00	Further
N 70 W	10.00	A Beech 28 in dia. marked "To C. G. 8 M."
N 70 W	80.00	At 30 a branch 3 lks wide NW. A cabbin near the spring at 75.00 Buck Cr. 50 lks. wide S. W. at 80.00 a Beech 8 in dia marked "To C. G. 9 M"
N 70 W	3.00	Further
N 50 W	26.00	
N 77 W	41.00	At 6.00 a Deer lick & branch 4 lks wide. E.
S 70 W	10.00	A beech 30 in dia. marked "To C. G. 10 M."
N 82 W	22.00	
N 52 W	4.50	
N 82 W	45.00	

S 85 W	8.50	A W. Oak 5 in dia. marked "To C. G. 11 M."
N 74 W	40.00	
West	22.00	
S 70 W	7.00	
S 58 W	11.00	A Poplar 36 in dia marked "To C. G. 12 M."
S 82 W	13.50	
N 77 W	5.00	
N 84 W	9.00	July 13 th . 1805.
West	10.50	
S 71 W	7.50	
S 55 W	19.50	At 15.00 a branch 18 lks wide S.
S 72 W	15.00	A B. Oak 22 in dia. marked "To C. G. 13 M."
S 76 W	31.50	
S 40 W	11.00	
S 72 W	26.00	Ind. Cr. 15 lks wide. SW. good water.
West	11.50	A W. Oak 18 in dia. marked "To C. G. 14 M."
N 78 W	21.00	
S 78 W	12.50	
N 72 W	31.00	
N 80 W	15.50	A B. Oak 18 in dia. marked "To C. G. 15 M."
N 63 W	8.00	
N 81 W	30.00	
S 83 W	12.00	
N 76 W	10.50	
N 59 W	19.50	A B. Oak 18 in dia. marked "To C. G. 16 M."
N 59 W	8.00	
N 88 W	11.50	
N 67 W	40.50	
N 80 W	12.00	
S 87 W	7.00	
N 83 W	1.00	A Hickory 12 in dia. marked "To C. G. 17 M."
N 83 W	80.00	A Hickory 14 in dia. marked "To C. G. 18 M."

N 83 W	80.00	A W. Oak 20 in dia. marked "To C. G. 19 M."
N 83 W	51.00	Further
N 33 W	6.00	
N 70 W	23.00	A W. Oak 14 in dia. marked "To C. G. 20 M."
N 70 W	10.00	
N 85 W	27.00	
N 44 W	10.00	
N 63 W	23.50	
N 83 W	5.50	
S 60 W	4.00	A W. Oak 19 in dia. marked "To C. G. 21 M."
N 88 W	25.50	
S 80 W	21.50	
N 75 W	8.00	
N 43 W	13.00	
N 75 W	12.00	A W. Oak 14 in dia. marked "To C. G. 22 M."
S 84 W	13.50	
S 70 W	6.50	
S 60 W	27.00	
S 84 W	33.00	A Hickory 12 in dia. marked "To C. G. 23 M."
S 77 W	29.00	
S 67 W	10.00	
S 82 W	12.00	
S 80 W	29.00	A B. Oak 12 in dia. marked "To C. G. 24 M."
N 65 W	10.00	
S 84 W	18.50	
N 65 W	8.50	
N 81 W	12.50	
N 44 W	5.50	
N 58 W	25.00	A W. Oak 20 in dia marked "To C. G. 25 M"
N 58 W	22.50	At 1.25 big blue Ri. 275 lks wide. S. W.
N 3 W	20.50	
N 60 W	16.00	

N 87	W	15.00	
N 52	W	6.00	A Hickory 24 in dia. marked "To C. G. 26 M."
N 45	W	8.00	
N 25	W	19.50	
N 70	W	30.00	
N 44	W	7.50	
N 63	W	7.50	
N 83	W	7.50	A B. Oak 24 in dia. marked "To C. G. 27 M."
N 73	W	9.00	
N 52	W	44.50	
N 62	W	7.00	
N 70	W	19.50	A B. Oak 30 in dia. marked "To C. G. 28 M."
N 70	W	31.00	
N 62	W	18.50	
N 45	W	13.50	
N 72	W	14.50	
N 80	W	2.50	A Hickory 9 in dia marked "To C. G. 29 M."
N 80	W	11.00	further.
N 66	W	4.50	
N 85	W	9.00	
N 60	W	9.00	
N 50	W	6.00	
S 77	W	18.00	
N 57	W	8.00	
N 83	W	14.50	A Poplar 20 in dia. marked "To C. G. 30 M."
N 83	W	13.00	further.
N 75	W	28.00	
N 85	W	13.50	
N 72	W	11.00	
N 41	W	6.50	
N 25	W	8.00	A Sugar 14 in dia marked "To C. G. 31 M."
N 25	W	6.50	further
N 46	W	5.50	A 4.50 Sullivan's Spring, E. July 15, 1805.
N 66	W	10.00	

N 47	W	7.50	
N 78	W	22.00	
N 68	W	21.00	
N 38	W	5.50	
N 54	W	2.00	A B. Oak 24 in dia. marked "To C. G. 32 M."
N 54	W	11.00	further
N 37	W	22.50	
N 20	W	29.00	
N 46	W	17.50	A Beech 12 in dia. marked To C. G. 33 M. Post on W bank of a branch 6 lks wide. S. E.
West		16.00	
N 73	W	19.00	
N 85	W	7.00	
N 66	W	11.00	
S 87	W	16.50	
N 85	W	6.50	
N 56	W	4.00	A Beech 15 in dia. marked "To C. G. 34 M."
N 81	W	11.50	
S 85	W	5.00	At 1.00 Little Blue river 200 lks wide S. E Samuel Hay [or Hays] lives on W. Bank
N 71	W	7.50	
N 58	W	55.00	
North		1.00	A W. Oak 12 in. dia. marked "To C. G. 35 M."
North		2.00	
N 49	W	42.50	At 30.00 a Run 4 lks wide. N. E.
N 62	W	16.00	
N 75	W	15.00	
N 54	W	4.50	A Dogwood 5 in dia. marked "To C. G. 36 M."
N 41	W	22.00	
N 51	W	51.50	
N 37	W	6.50	A W. Oak 28 in dia marked "To C. G. 37 M.
N 50	W	12.00	

N 75 W	14.00	
N 60 W	21.00	
N 40 W	8.50	
N 10 W	8.00	At 5.00 a Brook 12 lks wide N. W.
West	16.50	A Beech 10 in dia. marked "To C. G. 38 M" near a Brook.
West	18.00	further
N 42 W	6.50	
N 80 W	4.50	A Brook 12 lks wide. runs S.
N 38 W	31.00	
N 50 W	5.00	
N 64 W	15.00	A Beech 9 in dia marked "To C. G. 39 M."
N 59 W	20.00	
N 81 W	13.00	At 3.00 a Branch 10 lks wide. westerly.
S 75 W	7.00	At 5.00 a " 12 " " S. W.
S 47 W	25.50	
S 68 W	5.00	
S 84 W	6.00	
N 55 W	3.50	A beech 24 in dia. marked "To C. G. 40 M."
N 71 W	13.00	July 16, 1805.
S 75 W	25.50	At 21.00 a Branch 3 lks wide. S. W.
N 80 W	12.50	
S 72 W	16.00	At 10.75 a Branch 3 lks wide. S. W.
N 67 W	13.00	At 5.00 a " 4 " " S. W. & a Beech 14 in dia. marked "To C. G. 41 M."
S 80 W	40.00	
N 41 W	11.00	At 2.00 a Brook 10 lks wide. S. W.
N 60 W	19.00	
N 80 W	7.00	
S 76 W	3.00	A Sugar 14 in dia. marked "To C. G. 42 M."
N 78 W	6.00	
S 52 W	4.00	
N 64 W	2.50	
West	7.00	
N 74 W	8.50	
West	37.50	

N	79	W	14.50	A Beech 12 in dia. marked "To C. G. 43 M"
S	83	W	7.00	A Whet Stone Cave
S	73	W	9.00	
N	82	W	4.50	At 2.00 a Branch 6 lks wide. N. W.
S	68	W	7.50	At 4.50 Same branch S W. and E. boundary of Vincennes tract, where marked a Beech 12 in dia. "To C. G. 43 M & 28 ch." Variation $5^{\circ} 15'$ E. July 16, 1805. Surveyed by W ^m . Rector. Mr. Rector says that the lines heretofore run around Clark's Grant, "were surveyed without any allowance for Variation, therefore, they are not true courses, but magnetic ones."

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